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RED CHIEFS and WHITE CHALLENGERS

Confrontations in American Indian History

J. Jay Myers

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J. Jay Myers presents, in

RED CHIEFS AND WHITE CHALLENGERS:

Confrontations in American Indian History,

an unusual collection of biographical sketches of white pioneers and Indian leaders in historic confrontations.

The collision of the burgeoning white man's New World civilization and the peaceful native existence which it submerged is dramatically portrayed through the lives of the central figures in this dramatic struggle.

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Red Chiefs and White Challengers

Confrontations in American Indian History

by J. Jay Myers

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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To
Glenna Wallace Myers
My mother

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INTRODUCTION

THIS VOLUME is an illuminating collection of biographical sketches of both Indian and white leaders involved in historic confrontations. J. Jay Myers sheds new light on the continuing relationship between white man and red man on this continent. He suggests that tragedy was inevitable in the struggle that ensued as the whites' land hunger took them inexorably westward toward what they called their "manifest destiny."

The employment of multiple biographies in a cluster to illuminate some aspect of the human condition is a respected and established but seldom used literary device. The great models, of course, are William Bolitho's *Twelve Against the Gods,* life stories of a dozen picturesque risk-takers who lived their lives intent on defying the fates; or Gamaliel Bradford's *Damaged Souls,* a collection of unusual investigations of the lives of New England Puritans.

In dealing with his subjects, Mr. Myers has used modern sociopsychological techniques. He has not been content to present them merely before, during, and after the crises in their lives. The formative years of childhood and even parental influences are considered, the better to explain behavior under stress.

Perhaps the most valuable service the author has performed is to view his material from the standpoint of the prejudices, pressures, and events of the times. As we seek to reevaluate the past, we are likely to do so emotionally, to create new heroes and new villains. Mr. Myers' sketches serve as valuable correctives to this tendency. By painstaking consultation of contemporary court records, of the testimony of eye witnesses and of newspaper accounts, he has sought to present his people in full dimension, in the round rather than in the flat, with their faults and foibles as well as their virtues and nobilities. Mr. Myers acts vigorously, and alternately as prosecutor and as defense counsel. It is left to the reader to form the final judgments.

Perhaps the most extraordinary case study to emerge from this treatment is that of Captain John Smith. Mr. Myers practically demolishes the charming folktale of the doughty Virginian being saved from sudden death by the intervention of the love-stricken Indian princess who came to his rescue at the last possible moment. Instead, we get two possible John Smiths, of varying degrees of rascality and heroism.

Mr. Myers unusual method has another advantage: immediacy. As readers, we find ourselves involved in occurrences of extraordinary excitement, not in a mood of literary detachment at second or third hand, but as participants in an unfolding drama.

In the account of General Crook's long and grueling midwinter march north against the Cheyenne and the Sioux, we learn that "icicles formed on the men's moustaches and beards. The mercury stayed in the bulb. When the men ate they drew their forks through hot ashes so they would not strip the skin off their tongues."

The ghastly ordeal of the Cherokees' "Trail of Tears" is vividly described. Through John Ross, part Cherokee himself, we experience the sufferings of the tribe as it is moved from homes in the southeastern United States to "somewhere west of the Mississippi":

"A sick widow with a tiny baby and two other children was ordered to one of the stockades. . . . She strapped the baby on her back, took the other children by the hand, and started. She died as she walked from her home, her children still clinging to her."

Through the great Sioux chief, Sitting Bull, we take part in the battle of the Little Big Horn:

"As the Sioux swung their furious warriors away from Reno and went to attack Custer, the latter saw that he was greatly outnumbered and retreated up a hill. It was the same hill to which, the night before, Sitting Bull had gone alone to pray for the success of his warriors. . . ."

The intervening decades have produced no words more moving than those of the articulate Sioux leader, Chief Joseph, when he said,

"All men were made by the same Great Spirit Chief. They are all brothers. The earth is the mother of all the people, and all the people should have equal rights upon it. . . .

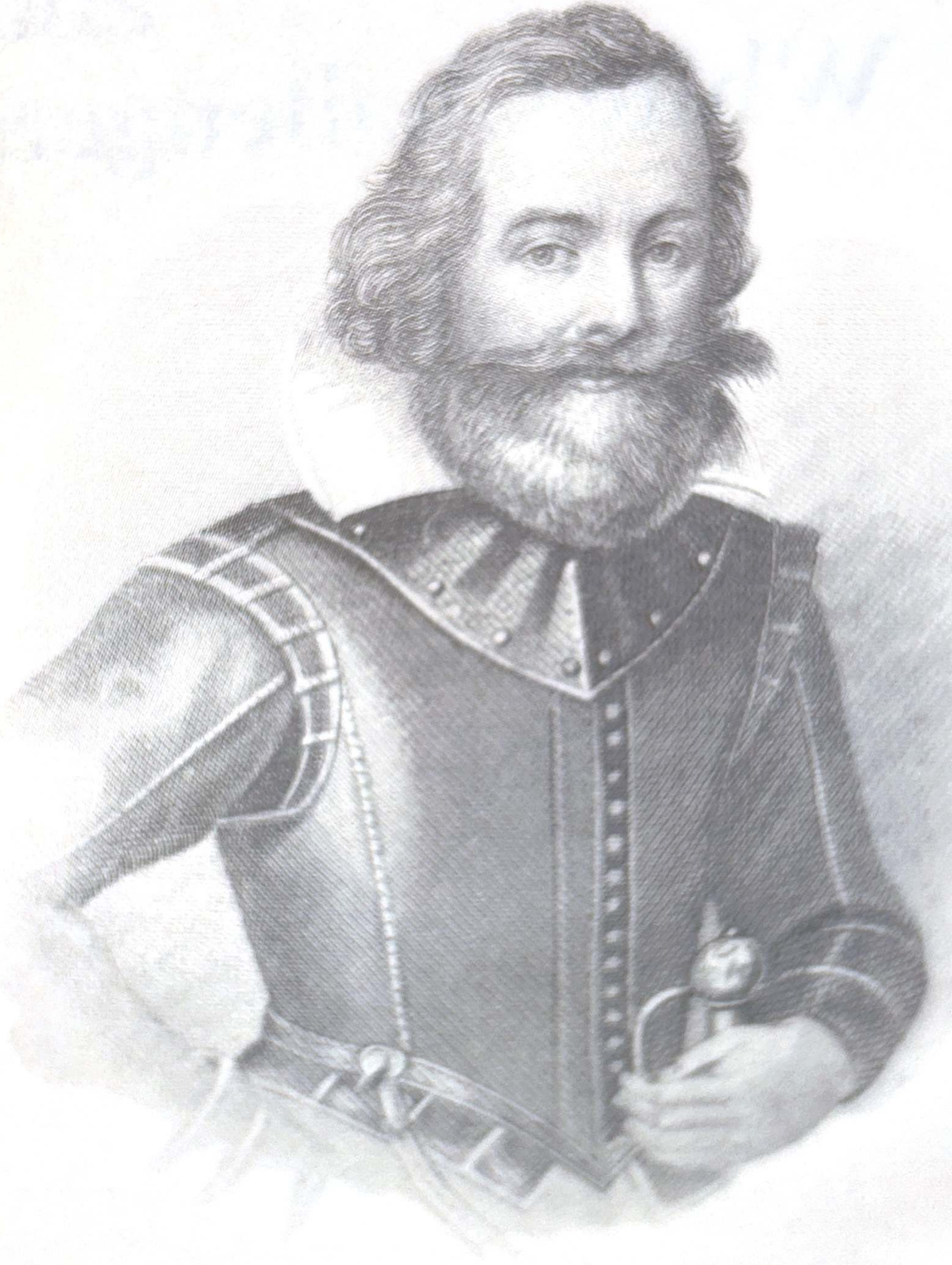
"Whenever the white man treats the Indian as we treat each other, then we will have no more wars. We shall be alike—brothers of one father and one mother, with one sky above us, and one country around us, for this we are waiting and praying."

There will be other books on various aspects of the confrontation. But this one will remain as an astringent reminder that whatever legend and myths may make of men, they are what they are, products of their antecedents and their times, unfathomable mixtures of good and bad, each judged in terms of our own prejudices and our changing values.

The approach here recalls the vivid phrase of Joseph Conrad: "Those who idealize life would rob it of one of its most charming characteristics—its complexity."

—Edward Sammis

Red Chiefs
and
White Challengers



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John Smith

Chapter 1

JOHN SMITH

Indian Fighter

TWO HUNDRED INDIANS suddenly materialized out of the forest. Each had an arrow nocked in his drawn bow and aimed at John Smith, the English captain. Most men would have accepted the situation as hopeless and would have surrendered, but not doughty, red-haired John Smith. He was ordered to release the Indian he'd been using as a shield. Holding his captive by the arm, he had the muzzle of his fine French wheel lock pistol jammed in the Indian's back. The hostage was pleading for his life. Smith was trying to figure a way out of his predicament. He was slowly backing up—watching the two hundred. Before he realized it, he had stepped backward into a quagmire. The Indian broke away and Smith's efforts to get out of the cold, sticky muck only settled him into it deeper and deeper. His legs were becoming numb in the icy ooze. Finally, he could resist no longer and threw his pistol onto the dry ground, as he had been ordered to do.

The Indians pulled him out of the bog, rubbed the circulation back into his legs, and took him to their village. He was brought before their chief, Opechancanough, half-brother of the great Powhatan.

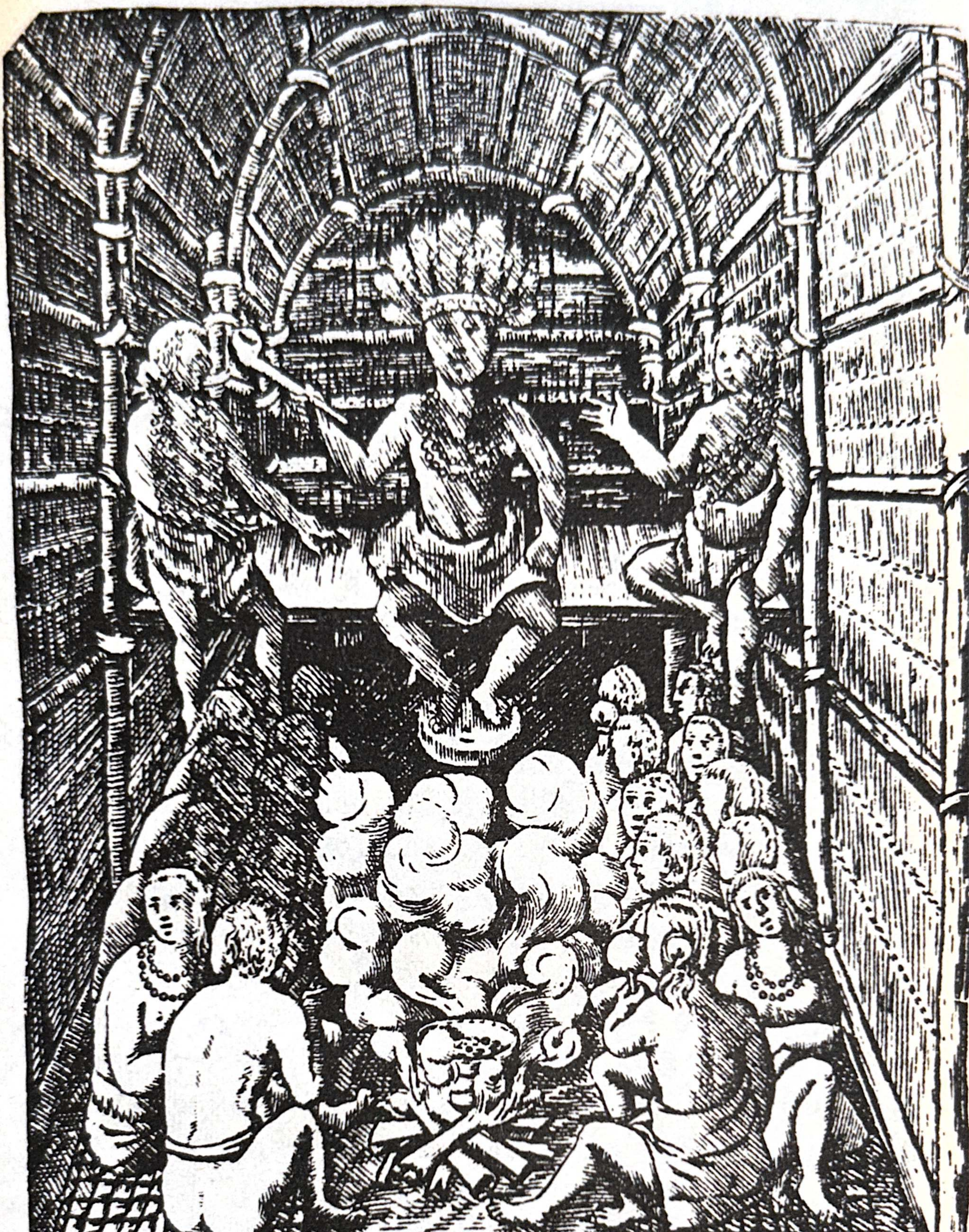
John Smith still did not give up hope. He wrote later that out of his doublet he dramatically took a compass, an elaborate one set in an ivory case. He demonstrated its mysterious workings, and talked for a whole hour about "the roundness of the earth, the course of the sun, moon, stars, and planets," and about the sea, and the greatness of England.

Suddenly, at a signal from their werowance, Opechancanough, the Indians seized their captive and tied him to a tree. Again in Smith's own words, referring to himself in the third person: "And as many as could stand about him prepared to shoot him, but the King holding up the compass in his hand, they all laid down their bowes and arrowes."

Then they took him to another place and the Indians formed a ring around him, dancing and singing and "yelling out such hellish notes and screeches." A great feast was spread before him, enough for twenty men. His guards watched Smith closely but continued to present him with great quantities of food. Then they took him with them as they traveled to other areas, gathering food.

Several weeks later they at last took him to "Weronocomoco where was Powhatan their Emperor." John Smith was admitted to the presence of the greatest werowance of them all. His fate, life or death, would be decided by Powhatan, who was lying on a dais of mats. A large fire was blazing. It was dark and smoky in the chief's great wigwam, but Smith could see that Powhatan was wearing chains of pearls and was wrapped in raccoon skins. There was a young woman near his head and one at his feet. Many subchiefs stood in rows behind him. A woman brought John Smith water to wash his hands and turkey feathers to dry them. Powhatan spoke to him "with goode words" and had platters of food brought in. The two men bragged to each other about the greatness of their lands and people.

At length, in the captain's own words: ". . . a long consultation was held but the conclusion was: two great stones were brought before Powhatan; then as many as could lay their hands on him dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head; and being ready with their clubs to beate out his braines, Pocahontas the King's dearest daughter, when no intreaty could prevaile, got his head in her armes, and laid her owne upon his to save him from death; whereat the


POWHATAN
Held this ſtate & faſhion when Capt. Smith was deliuered to him priſoner 1607

N.Y.P.L.

Powhatan, the Indian "Emperor"

Emperour was contented he should live to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper. . . ."

This is perhaps the best-known story in our early colonial history. And it also happens to be an overly romantic bit of fabrication, according to many historians. They say, for instance, that no Indians executed prisoners by beating out their brains. And despite the legend there was no romance, because Pocahontas was only about ten or eleven years old at the time. As a matter of fact, there are many historians who think that Captain John Smith is one of the most overrated characters in history. They say that rather than saving Jamestown he contributed more to its near destruction than anyone else.

Savior or destroyer? Historian or braggart? Did he really—almost single-handedly—save Jamestown? Most of the history books used in school say he did. However, the textbook authors are not the only ones who write unequivocally that John Smith's leadership, wisdom, energy, patience, and military skill saved the unfortunate remaining settlers of Jamestown in 1608 and 1609. Many historians can, and do, make the statement because no one can prove it wrong. In a recent book, a biographer of John Smith reminded his readers that nothing written by the "Captaine" has yet been proved to be a lie.

And why is it that nothing written by John Smith has been proved false? It's quite simple. His writings are our primary source of information about the first few years of life in Jamestown. Very little else has come down to us written by anyone who was actually there at the time. True, there are some letters that were sent back to England, but they were very likely censored; and George Percy, deputy governor of the Virginia colony, kept a diary—which has been of some help to historians.

Thus, what John Smith wrote about John Smith and the early years of Jamestown is what we know—or *think* we know. And what we know about the captain during the years he was not at Jamestown we have found out from his own writings, especially his autobiography. He called it *The True Travels, Adventures, and Observations of Cap-*

N.Y.P.L.

The legendary Pocahontas saving John Smith *taine John Smith, In Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, from Anno Domini 1593 to 1629.*

John Smith, the records show, was baptized on January 9, 1580, in the church at Willoughby in Lincolnshire, England. His father, George, was a farmer who had managed to raise his station in life from that of peasant to that of yeoman. This put him about halfway between a peasant and a gentleman. It was still obscurity.

John went to school. He was put in a countinghouse by his father to make some money and to make a name for himself. His father died, and at the age of sixteen John went into military service with Captain Joseph Duxbury. He saw military action in the Netherlands. After a brief stay in Scotland, he came back to Willoughby to study. But he was only twenty and craved more adventure. Off he went to Austria and received a billet in the Austrian army under the Earl of Meldrich. The Austrians were to drive out the Turks who were invading the Central Empire.

In that campaign John Smith wrote that he performed a most fabulous feat, "the affair of The Three Turks' Heads." Meldrich's army was besieging a city Smith called Regal. (There is no such place name on any map but Smith's supporters say it was probably the city of Alba Iulia.) A Turkish captain named Turbishaw issued a challenge to anyone of similar rank in the Christian army. The siege was boring and a duel would provide "exercise" and "delight the ladies who did long to see court-like pastime." The duel would be on horseback, the duelists would be fully armed, and they would fight to the death. The winner would cut off the loser's head and keep it as a trophy. There would be no interference from the spectators. It would be just like the jousting tournaments of the knights of old.

Smith wrote that because many Christian captains wanted to fight they drew lots, and he won the honor. Both armies lined up to watch. There was a great fanfare. The duelists, lances in place, charged. Smith related that he passed the Turk through the sight of his Beaver [face guard], face, head, and all, that he fell dead to the ground; where alighting and unbracing his helmet, cut off his head."

A friend of Turbishaw wanted to avenge the Turk's death and challenged Smith to another duel, with the same rules and the same trophy. Smith won again—without much trouble. Now he had two Turks' heads and felt, somehow, that he should issue a challenge—in the third person again: "If any Turk of their rank would come to the place of combat to redeem them [the heads] he should have his also upon like conditions, if he could win it." A Turk named Bonnie Mulgro wanted to try for Smith's head and redeem those of his friends. The weapons would be battle-axes, pistols, and broadswords. Smith described the fight in his autobiography:

> The next day the Champions entering the field as before, each discharging their Pistol . . . no hurt was done; their Battle-axes were next, whose piercing bills made sometimes the one, sometimes the other to have scarce sense to keep their saddles: especially the Christian received such a blow that he lost his Battle-axe, and failed not much to have fallen after it; whereas the supposing conquering Turk had a great shout from the Ramparts. The Turk prosecuted his advantage to the uttermost of his power; yet the other, what by the readiness of his horse, and his judgement and dexterity in such a business, beyond all men's expectation, by God's assistance, not only avoided the Turk's violence, but having drawn his Falchion, pierced the Turk so under the Culets through back and body, that although he alighted from his horse, he stood not long ere he lost his head, as the rest had done.

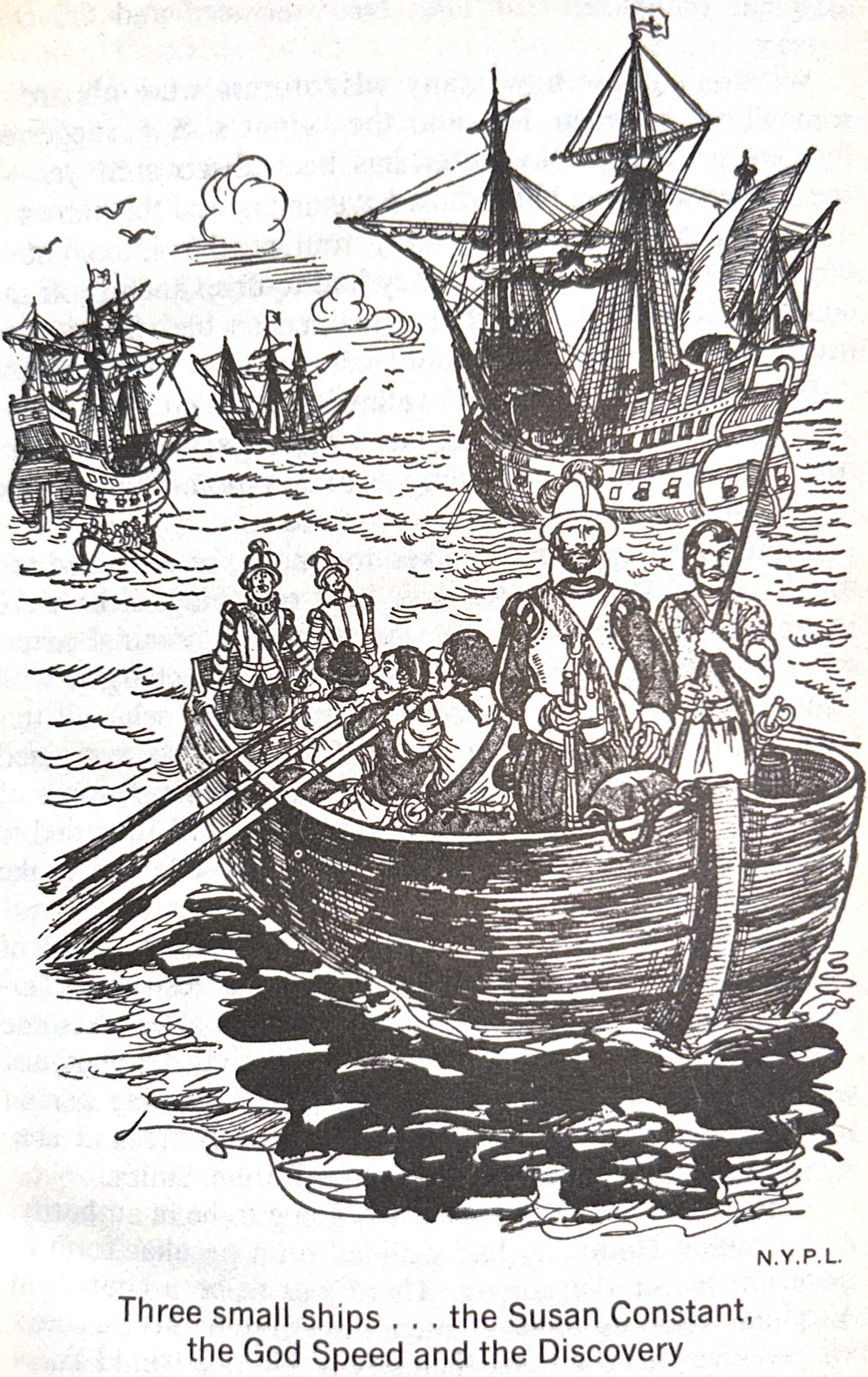
Eventually the besieged city fell to the Christian army. A military review and ceremony was ordered by the Earl of Meldrich. John Smith was promoted to major, given the rank of gentleman, and granted the privilege of wearing a coat of arms on his shield. It was to have three Turks' heads on it and Smith took an oath to always wear the three Turks' heads in his colors. Some historians maintain that this whole story was nothing but a fabricated tale of self-aggrandizement, even though the staid Heralds College investigated it and declared Smith did have the right to the coat of arms.

In a later battle, Smith wrote, he was seriously wounded, taken prisoner, and sold as a slave. The officer who bought him presented Smith as a gift to his mistress, who liked him and sent him to her brother for safekeeping. The brother hated him, put him to work in the fields, and beat him often. Smith finally rose up and "beat out the Tymor's brains with his threshing bat, for they have no flails." After his escape he wandered all over Europe trying to get back to England. He was several times befriended by ladies—one of whom "largely supplied all his wants." He even became involved with a French pirate and helped in a fight to obtain control of the throne of Morocco.

When he finally won his way back to England, he was still only twenty-four years old. Furthermore, he was no longer a farmer, but a military man, an adventurer, a soldier of fortune; and it was late in the year 1604.

John Smith's greatest adventure was about to begin. He felt he was advancing into middle age (which was not too far from the truth considering the short life-span of the average man at that time). If he were going to make something of himself, he had better be getting at it. He owned several small farms and he had some money. He had prestige, too, but mostly among the folks in Lincolnshire County, and that wasn't enough. He wanted more distinction than that.

His opportunity, he decided, lay in colonization. He became friends with Bartholomew Gosnold, already famous for exploring what is now the New England coast and for his skill at navigating and map making. He studied with Gosnold, and he talked with the great geographer Richard Hakluyt and the daring discoverer Henry Hudson. Then Smith deeply involved himself in two years of political maneuvering and the raising of capital for a colonizing venture in Virginia. When James I signed the grant of authorization on November 20, 1606, the Virginia Company of London was nearly ready to send out its adventurers. A month later, on the night of December 19, three



N.Y.P.L.

Three small ships . . . the Susan Constant,
the God Speed and the Discovery

small ships slipped out of the harbor at Blackwall—unnoticed: the *Susan Constant*, the *Godspeed* and the *Discovery*.

We don't know how many adventurers were aboard—somewhere between 104 and the "eight score" suggested by George Percy. No roster has been discovered yet—if there ever was one. Historians *have* uncovered the names of ninety-three. Most unfortunately, foul weather immediately beset these brave souls and they had to drop anchor off the coast of Kent. The weather remained so bad that it was four weeks before they could set sail for Virginia; and during the four weeks of wallowing and pitching many were stricken with *mal de mer*. Tempers were on short fuses; quarreling and brawling were common. This seemed to set the mood for the whole venture.

John Smith apparently talked too much, or criticized too much—repeated too often how he'd run things if he were in charge. At any rate, he was placed in nominal arrest when the ships reached the Canary Islands, charged with conspiracy. He wrote "Now Captaine Smith, who all this time from their departure from the Canaries, was restrained as a prisoner, upon the scandalous suggestions of some of the chiefs (envying his repute), who feigned he intended to usurpe the government, murder the Counsell, and make himselfe King."

There is no proof that Smith was officially accused of such a plot, but it seems certain that he was restrained (arrested) for thirteen weeks—from the Canaries to some time after the arrival at Jamestown. His chief antagonist was Edward Maria Wingfield, the highest ranking person in the venture. Probably Wingfield was too old and conservative for the twenty-four-year-old John Smith.

Actually, no one knew who was going to be in authority. The London Company had decided on a peculiar form of government for the colony. There was to be a council in Virginia, made up of seven men, who were to elect a council president from among themselves. No one would know who the seven were until the landing in Virginia, at which time sealed orders and instructions were to be opened.

Some of the "chiefe" were so upset with John Smith that, when they stopped in the West Indies for food and water, a gallows was built on the island of Nevis. Smith wrote, "Captaine Smith . . . could not be persuaded to use them." When the colonists arrived in Virginia on May 13, 1607, Wingfield's group wanted to send Smith home but he "scorned such charitie," and the other colonists "begat a hatred in the harts of the company against such unjust commanders."

Captain Christopher Newport, who was technically in command until the orders were opened, tried to effect a truce when it was discovered that John Smith was named on the "counsell." At first, of course, Wingfield would not hear of Smith's taking a place on the governing body. The election for president was held. Wingfield was elected president and gave a speech explaining why Smith was not to be seated. By June 10, however, Newport convinced Wingfield that harmony was important for the good of the colony, and Smith took his place on the council. (Smith obtained his revenge by writing for posterity that his enemies were slothful, deceitful, cowardly, and stupid, and that he had to fight them all the time.)

Whether John Smith was truthful, and whether he was right and Wingfield wrong are difficult problems to assess. Those writers who support Smith must also support his handling of relations with the Indians. Those who criticize him believe his handling of the Indian situation was deplorable—one of the most important causes of the tragedy at Jamestown. Smith's critics contend the adventurers needed the friendship of the Indians and could have had it. However, they started by lying about why they were there, saying they were just stopping off to repair their ships and obtain food and water; and they proceeded from that to a bluff, rough policy.

Smith's supporters say it is naive to believe the Indians could have been handled in any way but his get-tough manner. They insist that more realism like his would have saved much trouble, and that he handled properly the first critical situation. The Paspahegh chief, Wowinchapuncka, came to the encampment on a friendly call. One of his men was discovered walking off with an English hatchet.

Smith dispatched some men after the brave. They caught him, threw him roughly to the ground, and took the hatchet. Wowinchapuncka was angry and left in a huff. It was the beginning of continual warfare. John Smith believed that strength and firmness were the way to keep the upper hand.

Of course, Captain Smith was not in control of Jamestown yet. He was but one of seven. Wingfield was the most authoritative figure, but he was supplying none of the desperately needed leadership. Captain Newport had taken his ships back to England in late June to obtain supplies and more colonists. There was food in Jamestown to last thirteen or fourteen weeks. Newport could not possibly get back in that time, but no one was doing anything about obtaining food. The settlers were not planting, hunting, or trading. They were not even building any shelters. No one wanted to work; everyone wanted to explore and look for gold. About half of the men were classified as "Gentlemen." And a capital-G Gentleman did not—and would not—use his hands. He preferred to starve first. (Many of the Gentlemen did.) The non-Gentlemen wouldn't work either. Unfortunately, there were no sturdy yeoman-farmers among the group.

The makeup of the group should be a moderating factor when criticizing John Smith or the rest of the council. At least half of the colonists were gentlemen. The rest of the personnel represented a pretty good cross-section of English society of the day—except for the lack of farmers. Probably no one had any practical knowledge of farming.

Nor was this a dedicated or unified congregation as in Plymouth. With the Virginians, it was every man for himself. There were no families. The gentlemen were to hunt for gold and to try to discover the water route to Cathay. These were written instructions from the company. The "common sorte" were to construct buildings and raise crops, but they didn't care to construct or plant. They too wanted gold.

Under these circumstances it was inevitable that people were going to start dying, especially because the site chosen for Jamestown was about the most malarial that could have been found. (The Indians knew better; they would not live there.)

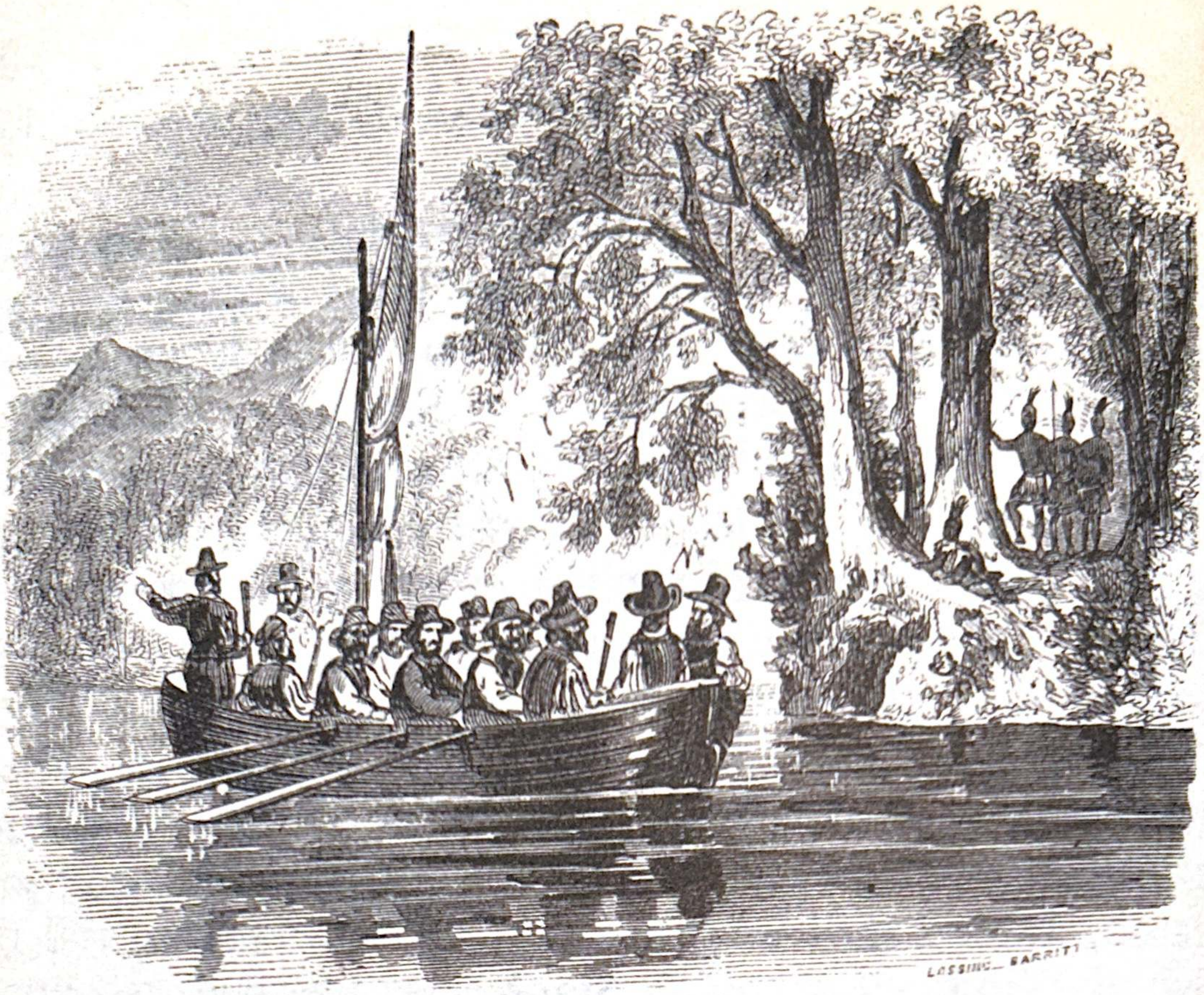
Disease, malnutrition, and Indian warfare began to take their tragic toll. And once the dying started, it went on and on—for years. Lessons seemed never to be learned. At last, things were so horrible that on September 10, 1607, John Smith, John Rattcliffe, and John Martin—all members of the council—deposed Edward Wingfield and placed him in restraint on board a pinnace left by Newport.

Things should have improved quickly. Most of the colonists were with the triumvirate—which was Wingfield's name for the three. But things did not improve. The bickering and scheming, and the starving and malaria grew worse. The Indian conflict intensified. The dying increased. John Smith used precious days to hold a trial of Edward Wingfield at which Smith was awarded two-hundred pounds for the charges Wingfield had earlier placed against him.

John Smith was named cape merchant when Thomas Studley died in August and it became his job to obtain food and to see that it was stored properly. He did nothing about his responsibility until late in November, by which time there was enough food to last a maximum of two weeks. The captain organized an expedition that proved to be a wild one. Friendly Indians were shot at in a surprise attack and made to fill an oar-powered barge with corn—enough to last a few days. But the maneuver cost the colonists all chances of trading with those Indians in the future.

Two weeks later Smith took an expedition up the Chickahominy River. He found Indians willing to trade and obtained enough corn to last several weeks.

Another two weeks passed and the captain decided to go exploring. There were thirty-six men still alive, and Smith took nine of them with him. They went up the Chickahominy on a barge—looking for the water route to the Pacific. When the water became too shallow for the barge Smith took two men with him in a canoe, along with an Indian guide. Farther up the river they put in to shore.



N.Y.P.L.

Exploring the Chickahominy

Smith left the two Englishmen at the canoe while he and the guide went exploring—perhaps looking for gold.

At this juncture the captain was suddenly accosted by two hundred Indians—the situation with which this chapter opens. *And* we have two versions of this event, both of them written by John Smith. You can take your choice. One was written shortly after it happened. The other was written sixteen years later.

In 1608 John Smith wrote a calm, matter-of-fact report which historians call the "True Relation"—an abbreviated form of his title: *The True Relation of Virginia Since the First Planting of that Collony*. In 1624 he wrote what is called the "Generall Historie." Smith's title was *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles*. Henry Adams became interested in the story while he was serving under his ambassador-father in London during our Civil War. He discovered the wide divergence in the two versions and wrote a paper about it for *The North American Review*.

Adams pointed out that the "Generall Historie" seems to be more exaggerated in numerous instances. In "True Relation" Smith described the Indians who held him captive as savage, but not cruel or bloodthirsty. Actually, he made them out to be kind and even magnanimous. He intimated that his treatment was better than he would have expected from many European captors of that time; that he had no fear for his life. In the "Generall Historie," however, Smith stated that he feared he was being fattened up prior to being killed and eaten—that he was in constant fear of his life.

In "True Relation" there is no mention made of his rescue by Pocahontas—no mention of having his head placed on stones. Pocahontas was talked about because she came often to Jamestown with Indians who brought corn to the colonists from her father, Powhatan. Henry Adams then stressed that nothing written by 1614—by anyone—mentions a rescue. This includes another tract, *A Map of Virginia,* by John Smith. It includes a letter written by John Rolfe explaining his love for Pocahontas and his marriage to her. No one even mentioned the rescue when Pocahontas was in England where she was received at court and was the center of attention for a whole winter.

Henry Adams suggested—perhaps unkindly—that Smith included the rescue in the "Generall Historie" because he was trying to improve his personal image and raise money in order to get back to Virginia, which he dearly loved. Finally, Adams questioned both accounts and wondered if one could really believe *anything* Smith wrote.

At any rate, when John Smith did get back to Jamestown he was accused of murdering the two men he'd left at the canoe when he went ashore. His enemies said that he was responsible for their lives but failed to protect them from the Indians—who had indeed slain them. He was tried, found guilty, and was to be hanged the next day. Miraculously, Captain Newport arrived from England and saved him from execution under the provisions of a law taken from Leviticus.

Newport had brought supplies and seventy more colonists. Powhatan sent corn to help the colonists, and John Smith wrote that it was because he had "so enchanted those pore soules" that now they "admired him as a demi-God."

Newport and Smith then made a most ostentatious visit to Powhatan. Newport trusted the chief and liked him. Smith distrusted him and complained that Newport, by his overgenerosity in trading, made it almost impossible for Smith to trade—except at inflated rates—after Newport had returned again to London.

Just prior to this visit a fire had virtually destroyed Jamestown and completely destroyed the supplies brought by Newport. Powhatan kept the colonists alive with gifts of corn sent several times a week. No one made any attempt to rebuild the settlement for several months. Finally, Smith wrote, he got the "common sorte" to work planting crops and rebuilding. Then another ship carrying provisions came in from England and planting ended. They still hadn't learned to provide for themselves; people went on dying.

By this time John Smith was apparently the dominant figure at Jamestown. There were only a few council members left, and Smith seemed able to depose and appoint presidents—in between his explorations. In the spring of 1608 he was gone six weeks. He came back, deposed John Rattcliffe as president, and installed Mathew Scrivener in his place. Then he went exploring for another six weeks. He came back and became president himself. All this time people had been dying from disease, malnutrition, and Indian attacks by Wowinchapuncka's unfriendly Paspaheghs.

Now things improved, the captain wrote. He set people to working: the church was repaired, a half-acre more was added to the area enclosed by the palisade, military drills were held every Saturday. He had a new roof put on the storehouse, but the provisions had already rotted. (It had been his duty to keep the storehouse in good shape; he'd preferred to explore.) An attempt was made to depose him, which he thwarted. Perhaps he was hated because he insisted that those who would not work would not eat. By this time only one of every four settlers who had come to Virginia was still alive. Another ship arrived with more colonists, but "without victuall." The ship did bring two women, however—the first two.

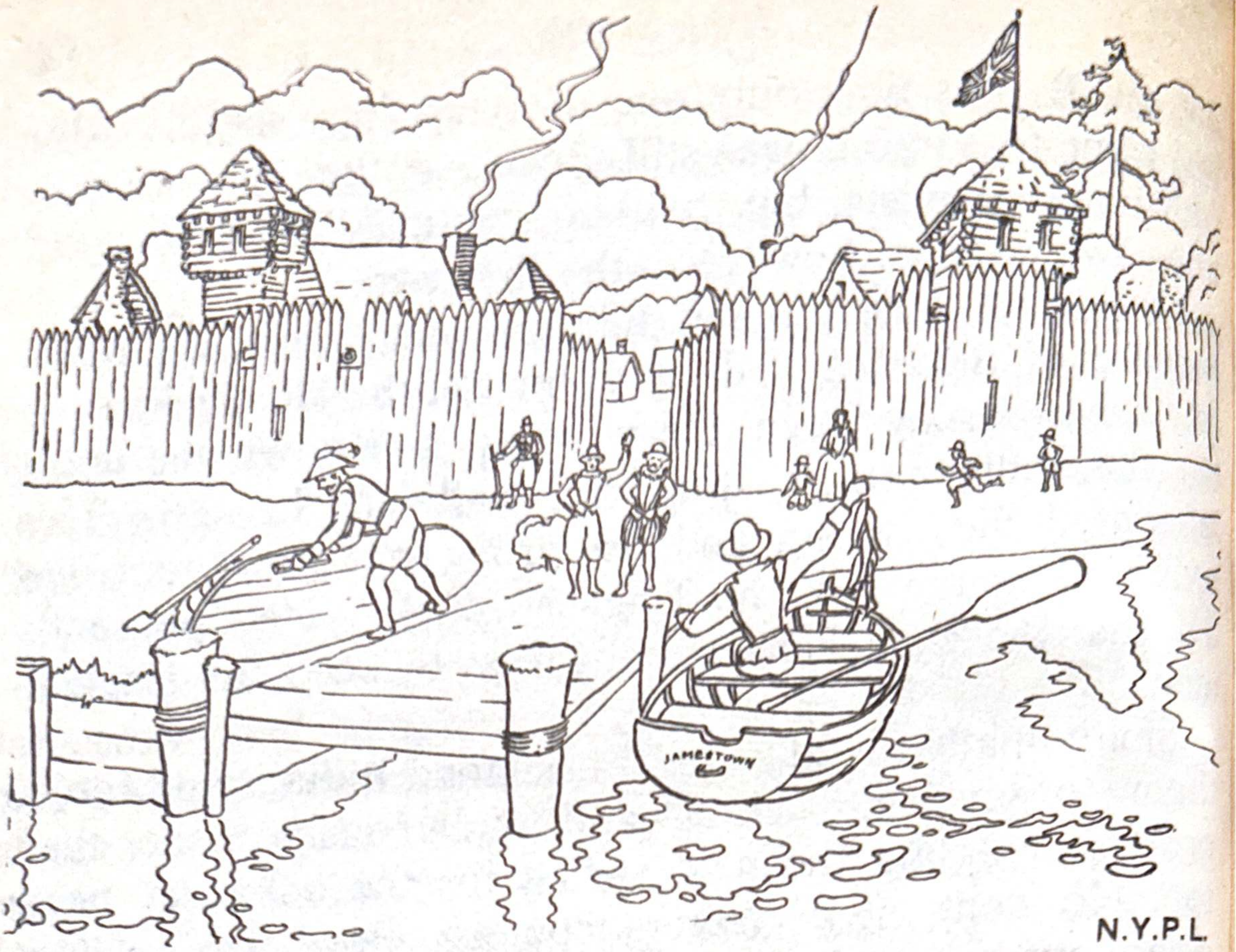
By this time the Indians didn't want to trade any more because of the raids led by John Smith. He decided to get provisions by force. He went up and down the coast but the Indians, distrusting him, had left the area. This infuriated the captain and he wrote that Powhatan was trying to starve out the English settlers. He apparently felt that the chief had an obligation to keep the Englishmen alive.

Smith finally found some Nansemond Indians and forced them to give him corn—and audaciously made them promise to plant the next spring for the colonists' needs too. He went on to Weremocomoco, Powhatan's village. There was mutual distrust between them and Powhatan refused to give corn to Smith, but said he would trade corn for guns, other weapons, and articles of use, like copper kettles. The captain refused.

He went on to Opechancanough's village. He was treated royally, and fed well—as he had been at Weremocomoco, too. He and his men feasted on "plentie of bread, Turkies, and Venison." The chief didn't want to trade so the captain picked a quarrel. To his surprise, however, he discovered that suddenly "at least seven hundred salvages, well armed, had invironed the house and beset the fields."

As to what happened next, you again have a choice, for again the captain reported it two ways. In both versions he first challenged Opechancanough to individual combat. The chief didn't understand this European idea and refused. In the 1608 version Smith then grabbed the chief by the arm, put a pistol at his breast and paraded him around until all the "salvages" laid down their arms, and some corn was put in the Englishmen's boat pulled up on shore.

In the later version Smith related a speech he gave the sixteen men with him. It was all about how the odds were not really much against them because the seven hundred



N.Y.P.L.

Building Jamestown

were only Indians. He concluded with: "promise me you will be valiant." Then he grabbed Opechancanough by the scalplock (not the arm), and paraded him around in humiliation with a pistol at his ribs until all the Indians had laid down their arms and put corn in the boat.

Opechancanough later achieved a terrible revenge, with two near-massacre attacks on the settlement.

During the winter Smith found it impossible to make the colonists work very much. "They'd rather starve in idleness than feast in labor." In the spring, however, Captain Smith got almost everyone to work. Things hummed. They planted thirty acres, made barrels of pitch, tar, and soap ashes to send back to the company. They made fishing nets, built more houses, dug their first well—had good water for the first time. But in the midst of all this they suddenly discovered that the storehouse was in such horrible condition again that all their supplies were rotted away or rat-infested. All work stopped.

Captain Smith divided all the people into groups and sent them to various localities to find food and to remain there until a ship came with provisions. Many died, according to some sources. None died, according to Smith.

In July 1609 a small but well-provisioned ship arrived. It was the first of a fleet of nine ships sent out by the company. There was to be a complete reorganization of the colony. John Smith was to be relieved of command, the company's letter said, because of "hard dealing with the salvages, and not returning the ships fraughted" (loaded with goods).

Some of Smith's previous enemies were sent back to assume authority in the now much larger Jamestown. In October 1609 Captain John Smith embarked for England—never to return to Virginia. Physically ill, from a gunpowder accident, and very much embittered, he left. On the same ship went a list of indictments drawn up by his enemies. The company never hired him again.

Smith spent the rest of his life promoting colonization. He wrote a great deal and had much of what he wrote published. He did get back to America, though not to Virginia. In 1614 he explored a segment of the coast that he named New England. He made fine maps, and wrote excellent descriptions of the area. In 1615 he led a colonizing expedition to somewhere on the northern shore. Pirates chased him, and a French man-of-war captured him and took him prisoner. He escaped after several months and tried for years to secure backing for another expedition. In 1620 he offered his services to the Pilgrims—to be their military leader—but they bought his maps and then hired Miles Standish.

Captain John Smith continued to promote colonization enthusiastically; writing, talking, scheming, until he died in June 1631, having packed into fifty-one years an extraordinary amount of exciting adventure.

Was it indeed a fortunate day when John Smith was sent back to England after a disastrous year as president? Or, was he the only one who truly knew how to deal with the Indians, and the only one who kept the colony from perishing?

Thomas Fuller, writing in the 1660s, said "His perils, preservations, dangers, deliverances, they seem to most men beyond belief, to some beyond truth . . . and it soundeth much to the diminution of his deeds that he alone is the herald to publish and proclaim them."

A recent biographer, after five years of collecting information, says that too much has been made of trivial inconsequences in Smith's stories, that basically the tales are true, according to previously obscure sources.

There is obvious disagreement about whether John Smith was a savior or a destroyer, a historian or a braggart. There should be little doubt, however, that he set a policy regarding the attitude of most English colonizers toward those people who were living here when they arrived. Almost all the English—and later the Americans—relegated the Indian to an inferior status, exploited him, and made him an enemy to be driven away or destroyed.

John Smith
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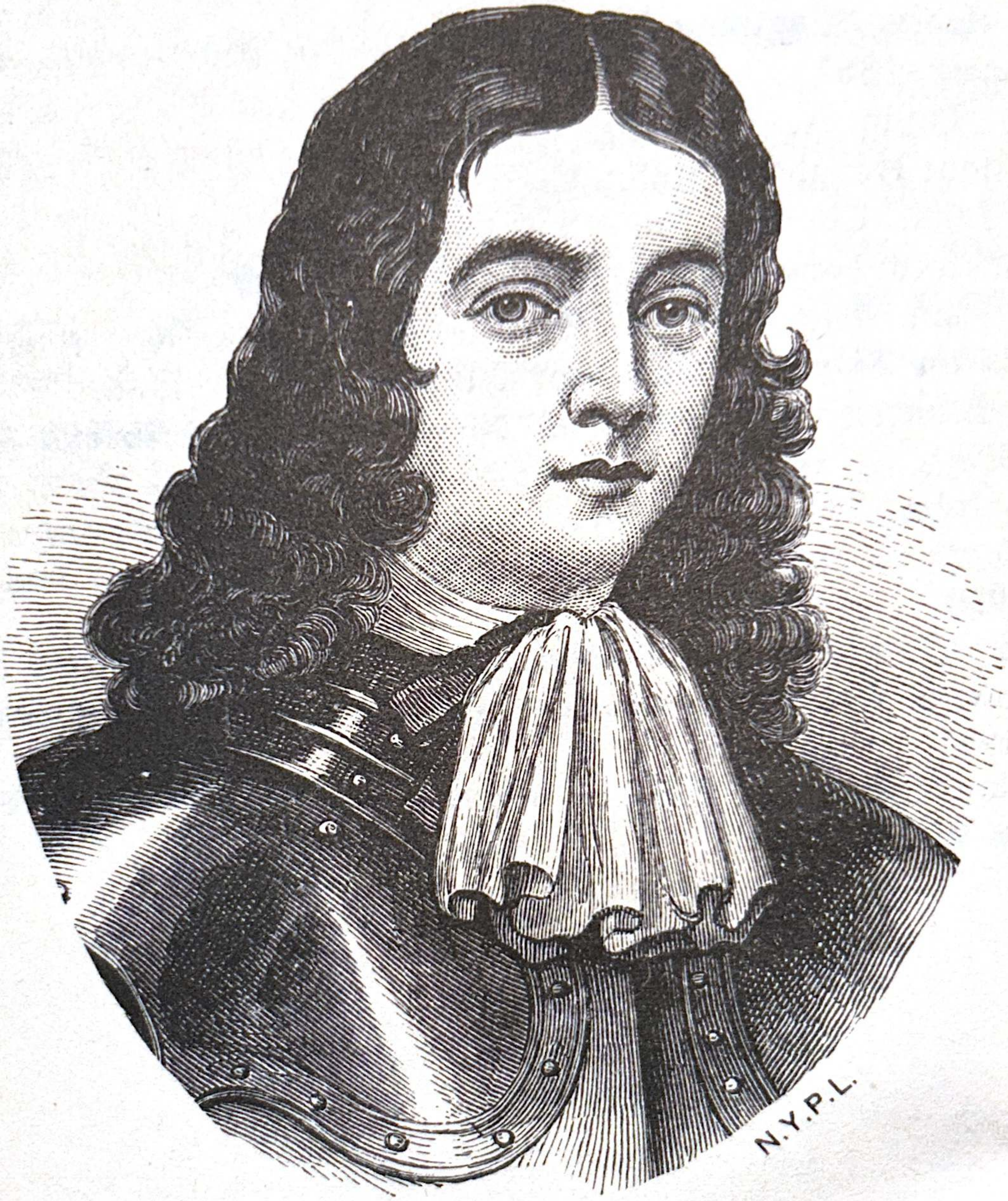


William Penn

Chapter 2

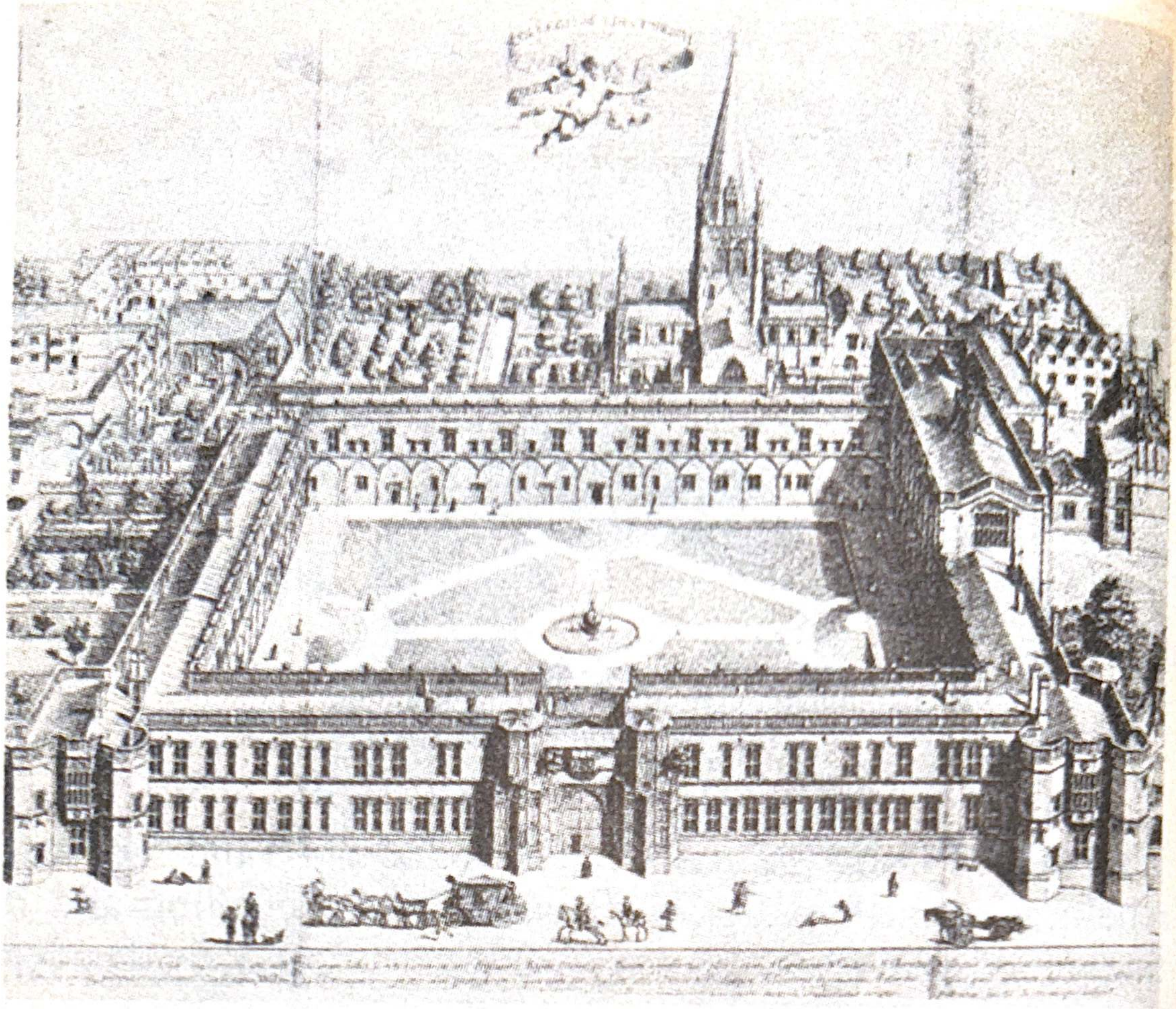
WILLIAM PENN

Indian Lover

WILLIAM PENN was seventeen years old, and he was rebelling against authority. It was serious rebellion and it threatened grave consequences. But he had already decided that he must be true to his own conscience.

It mattered to him that his father strongly disapproved of what he was doing, and he worried about the awkward position into which his father was thrust. His father was Admiral Sir William Penn, knighted by Charles II for great naval victories against England's enemies and for helping to restore Charles to his throne at the end of the Cromwell regime. Sir William was not only a royalist and a good friend to Charles, he was very close to the king's younger brother James, Duke of York. Sir William was a very important person in England in 1661, a national hero.

Son William was more concerned, though, with his own immediate pressing problem. He was a second-year student at conservative old Christ Church College, Oxford University. He had written that he found Oxford a place of "hellish darkness." It was already many hundreds of years old, but that didn't bother him. It was steeped in royalist tradition, and he did not object to that; he was steeped in it, too. He objected to John Fell, the newly appointed dean, a very able administrator, who was trying to make every student live by his rigid rules. Every



ENGRAVING BY DAVID LOGGAN, COURTESY N.Y.P.L.

Christ Church College, Oxford University, 1673

student was to adhere strictly to the idea that the Church of England was to be the only church, the only religion, in England. Every student was to wear the surplice—a loose, white, large-sleeved gown worn by the clergy and choirs in the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches. Every student was to attend chapel daily—Church of England chapel.

William also objected strenuously to most of his fellow students. They were products of the new Restoration Era, and they were reacting against the stern years of Cromwellian Puritanism. They were obscene, cruel, vain, boisterous, uncouth, and worst of all, they were absolutely intolerant of anyone who did not adhere to the tenets and symbolism of the Church of England. They meted out duckings, beatings, and other brutalities to minority dissenters, like the gentle Quakers who spoke for a return to early Christian principles.

Young William found himself more and more in the company of the dissenters. He refused to wear the surplice and he refused to attend the Church of England chapel. He worshipped with some other students at their own service. And he attended lectures given by Doctor John Owen. Owen had been dean before Doctor Fell, but because he was a Puritan he had been removed when the Royalists returned to power. Probably William went to the Owen lectures primarily because his friends went. He still was not certain what he believed, but he much preferred the company of the dissenters to the wild "black tribes of scholars."

Because of his rebellion he became one of those singled out for harassment. In later years he wrote about his "persecution at Oxford" and about how he was "sustained" by the Lord. He was also fined by Doctor Fell. He was still, however, the son of the great Sir William, and Fell had to be careful. Finally, though, even that could not save him and he was expelled in March of 1662.

When son William arrived home he was not received with open arms. Sir William was furious. He had tried to reason with his son before, had pointed out what a great future he could have, a chance to become an important figure in England's dominant role in the world. He had such a grand opportunity to achieve influence and wealth, but here he was flouting the Church of England and the king. Sir William's quick temper prevailed and William described it as "bitter usage . . . whipping, beating and turning out of doors." William left the family home, penniless, but Sir William repented of the "turning out of doors" and William returned. However, things were not as they had been. William was a troubled young man. He loved his father. He knew his father loved him, but there was no chance for discussion of his problem because Sir William could not or would not talk about this philosophical matter of conscience. So William stayed in his room.

Because he had to talk to someone, he began corresponding with Doctor Owen. Sir William found some of Owen's letters and was so distressed that he decided on immediate action. Young William would be sent to France. Every young Englishman of "quality" went to France for a year or so. A sojourn there was essential for acquiring the polish, the gentility, the subtlety a gentleman must have. Sir William undoubtedly thought that some time spent in Paris would lead William away from so much introspection about his soul. There were many diversions in the Paris of Louis XIV.

They were not diverting enough for young William, though. In six months he wearied of them and hungered for an atmosphere of learning and contemplation. He found it in Saumur on the Loire River. A school there was presided over by a great and gentle man, Moïse Amyraut. A man of brilliance and a man of great courage, Amyraut taught, wrote, and preached religious liberty at a time when it was dangerous to do so. Young William attended Amyraut's classes for at least a year and lodged at his home, hearing the appealing idea that a church does not save a man's soul—a man does that himself, with the aid of God. And just "believing" was not enough—a man must perform acts of charity; he must be responsible for his brothers.

Amyraut died and William Penn went back to the turmoil of Restoration London. He was nearly twenty years old. He had acquired poise and excellence in French. His dress and his manners were continental. Sir William was pleased with what he saw—a mature young gentleman nearly ready to take his place in governmental circles. Apparently William had decided his future was in government, too, because he agreed to enroll at Lincoln's Inn, where the sons of quality families went to acquire the legal training that topped off their education. He had only been there a few months, however, when war was declared against Holland.

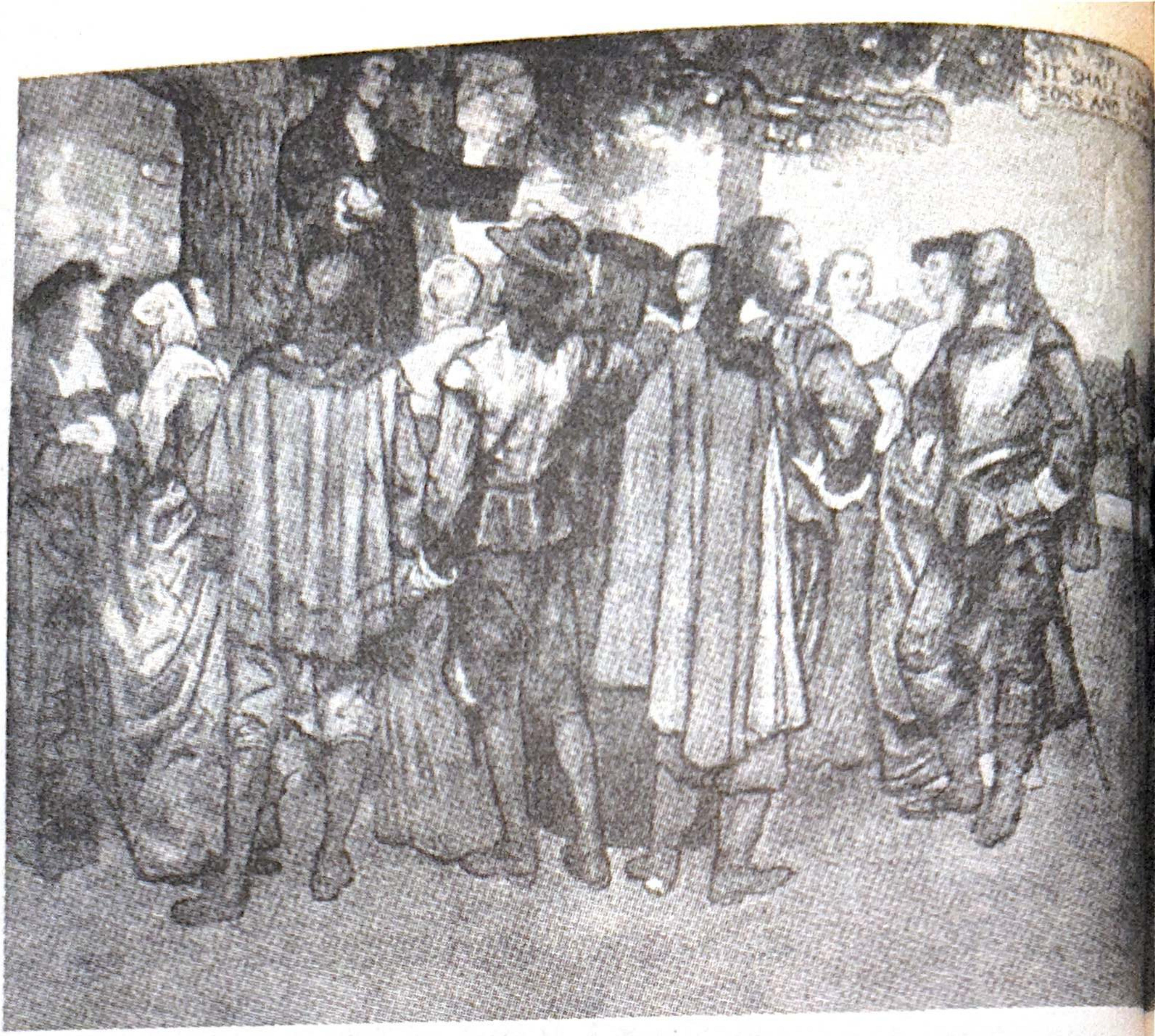
Sir William was Great Captain Commander of a fleet of thirty-eight ships, and the eight thousand men who sailed them. Son William stayed aboard his father's flagship for several weeks watching the preparations for action. He was much impressed with Sir William and with England's power. Soon after his return to London he was to hear the shouts of men with carts collecting the bodies of those who had died from the scourge of the Great Plague, "Bring out your dead!" Seventy thousand people had died.

Yet young William saw the Quakers defying death to help the sick. They took food to those quarantined in boarded-up houses. They went into the houses of the stricken to bring comfort. They helped collect the dead for burial in mass graves. Many of them died from the plague, and many were arrested and imprisoned for daring to hold their own religious meetings. William was impressed by the Quakers' quiet devotion to their fellowmen. They were living Amyraut's philosophy of being one's brother's keeper.

Then Sir William returned from the war, covered with glory; he had routed the Dutch in a great victory. However, his health was failing, and he found he could not attend to the great land holdings in Ireland that had been awarded him. Son William, now twenty-one, could handle the work, he decided, and William soon found himself in Ireland completely involved in the duties of a landed gentleman. He was a very personable young man—gay and witty when it fit the situation, grave when that was suitable, or gallant when the occasion demanded it.

In less than a year William had the situation in Ireland running smoothly and Sir William wanted him to come home for a visit. When he returned to London the city was just beginning to recover from the disaster of the Great Fire, which had roared for four days and nights. Thirteen thousand homes had been destroyed and William saw the pitiful creatures who crawled back to search the ashes for cherished articles that might have escaped destruction. The Quakers, who were still being persecuted, were trying to help those in desperate need, and when William returned to Ireland, wearing the silks, ruffles, and the sword of a courtier, he could not erase from his mind their efforts to help their fellowmen. Nor could he forget Amyraut or his friends at Oxford.

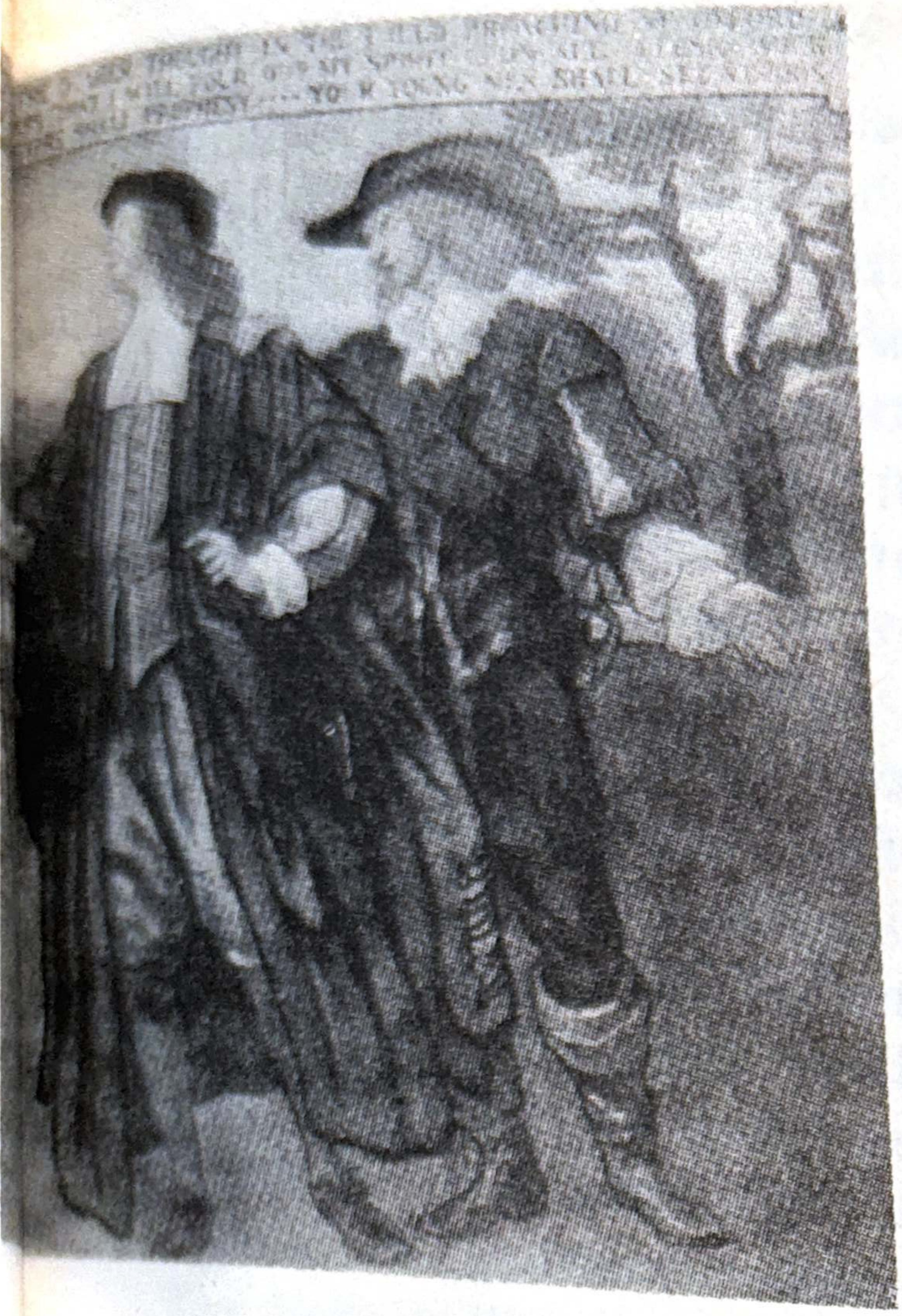
In Cork he searched for and found a Quaker he knew. The man told him there was going to be a meeting the



William Penn listening to a Quaker preacher

next day at which the great Thomas Loe was going to speak. Although attired as a courtier William attended the meeting with the plainly dressed Quakers. There were no ceremonies, no pageantry, no choir. There was peaceful silent contemplation and then the giving of testimony. Loe said, "There is a faith that overcometh the world and a faith that is overcome by the world." As Loe continued, William became convinced that he had allowed himself to be sucked into the "glory of the world"—the artificiality of rank and material wealth. He later wrote, "It was at this time that the Lord visited me with a certain sound and testimony of his eternal word."

William Penn began to cry. He felt a great compulsion to rise to his feet and bear witness. He stood up, wanting to speak about what was happening to him, but words would not come. He just stood and wept. He knew, though, that from that moment on he would be a seeker of truth, of the only way of life for him.



N.Y.P.L.

He began to follow the Quakers. Wherever they met, he was there. He had new friends—plain honest seekers like himself. The more he found out about their beliefs the more he was convinced. Any person could communicate with God. There was no need for a church or a minister. There was no need for baptism. The doctrine of the Trinity was a false doctrine. There should be no sacraments, no ceremonies. Christians should attempt to return to the simplicity of the early Christians. Slavery should be abolished. Prisons should be reformed; they should be institutions for rehabilitation, not punishment. There should be organizations to care for the poor, the old, and the sick. There should be no ranks of people; every person was equal to every other person. To demonstrate this, Penn's new friends refused to doff their hats to anyone (not even to the king) and they addressed everyone with "thee" and "thou"—previously used only to address servants and other people of inferior rank.

These beliefs were radical enough for England of the seventeenth century, but when the Quakers refused to pay taxes to support the Church of England they invited active persecution by the government. The more Quakers there were, the more intense was the persecution. Some of them escaped to the colonies, but it was no better there. They suffered whippings and banishments, and some of them were even hanged.

William Penn knew the religion he had espoused was not one for the fainthearted. He was prepared to fight, and when a soldier blustered into a meeting young William grabbed him and was hustling him to the door to throw him out before the older members could point out that this was not their way. They believed violence begets violence. Penn released the soldier, who promptly went to the authorities. The officers came to the meeting, dispersed it, and arrested nineteen of those attending, including the son of Admiral Sir William Penn.

The nineteen were haled before the town mayor, who quickly pointed out that it was obvious from his cavalier clothes that Penn was not a Quaker. He ordered him released, but William Penn insisted he *was* a Quaker and that he be treated no differently from the others. Then he assumed the role of legal counselor for the group, asking upon what charge they were being held. The charge, the mayor said, was being part of a tumultuous and riotous assembly. Penn insisted the charge was not valid. He was imprisoned with the others—and with a dramatic sense, just before he passed through the door of the prison, he unbuckled his sword, handed it to a spectator, saying he would from then on walk unarmed in a world that was armed.

Immediately he wrote a letter to the Earl of Orrery, Lord President of Munster. He protested the imprisonment of people who had been meeting in "the service of God." He hoped his lordship would not allow a mayor to exert so much malice. Diplomatically, he suggested that he knew dissent was being labeled heresy, ". . . yet I dare believe your lordship is better read in reason and theology, than to subscribe a maxim so vulgar and untrue. . . ." William and the others were released, and letters were sent to Sir William informing him of the antics of his son. Sir William wrote a letter to son William: "I charge you and strictly command that you come to me with all possible speed. In expectation of your compliance . . ."

That was in early October of 1667. Two weeks later Sir William wrote another letter—not quite so commanding but still firm. William was busy with his Quaker activities; nevertheless, he decided he should go to his father. When he arrived in December Sir William could hardly believe his eyes and ears. William refused to take off his hat, even in the presence of his father, and he addressed him with "thee" and "thou." William was truly sorry to see his father so distressed and he was truly sorry he could not do what his father desired. He loved his father, but he could not forsake his conscience.

The two Williams avoided each other as much as possible. It was a big house. Young William became involved in the activities of the Quakers in London where he was becoming a leader, a respected one. He soon felt that he must give his whole life to his religion, and he became a minister, rapidly becoming eloquent in his persuasion of new members. Before long the inevitable happened. One of the meetings was raided, he was swept up with the others and taken before a magistrate who recognized him and refused to arrest him. Instead he sent a note to Sir William about the "tumult" young William was creating.

Sir William was already burdened with weighty problems. His health was failing rapidly and he was the target of political intrigue, being charged with having embezzled prize goods from captured Dutch ships. William's escapade was too much. The two had talked on numerous occasions. There was nothing new either one could say. Son William was ordered out of the house—bag and baggage. He was a martyr and there was a certain kind of satisfaction in being a martyr. His writings indicate he took considerable joy from his new role.

William also came to realize he had a role that no other

Quaker could play—that of liaison between the Quakers and the government. He still had friends in high government places and he also had absorbed considerable legal background at Lincoln's Inn. He was going to perform this function most of the rest of his life to further the cause of religious liberty.

He plunged himself into his work. In November 1668 he wrote a tract that mightily offended the leaders of the Church of England. Among other things he wrote there was no Trinity. This was heresy of the rankest form. On December 12 he was arrested and committed to prison in the Tower of London on the technicality of having illegally published his tract. He was confined in a little cubicle under the roof—he broiled in the summer and froze in the winter. He was told that if he would recant publicly he would be set free, otherwise he could spend the rest of his life in the infamous Tower. "My prison shall be my grave before I will budge a jot," he replied, "for I owe my conscience to no mortal man. I have no need to fear. God will make amends for all."

Only twenty-four years old, William Penn wrote letters to important people about his confinement in the Tower. None could help him, though, and he would absolutely not retract what he had written in his tract. Finally, a wise friend pointed out that the most serious accusation against him was that he had denied the divinity of Christ. Why didn't William now write a tract carefully explaining exactly what he had written previously. Obviously, a Quaker was a Christian and therefore could not deny the divinity of Christ. The explanatory tract and the influence of important people secured his release—nearly nine months after he was committed. There was one condition to his release: He was placed in the custody of his father—a type of probation.

The father needed the son. Although Sir William had cleared himself of all the charges against him, the effort had sapped much of his vitality, and he sent William to Ireland to take care of his lands and financial affairs, and incidentally removing William from London for a while.

William handled his father's business concerns and also threw himself into the concerns of the Irish Quakers. Eighty of them had been unjustly imprisoned. William Penn used all his diplomatic skills, knowledge of law, and cavalier's influence to secure their release. He was very clever and very well liked. Though he lived in his two worlds successfully, he was often criticized by those Quakers who did not comprehend his liaison function.

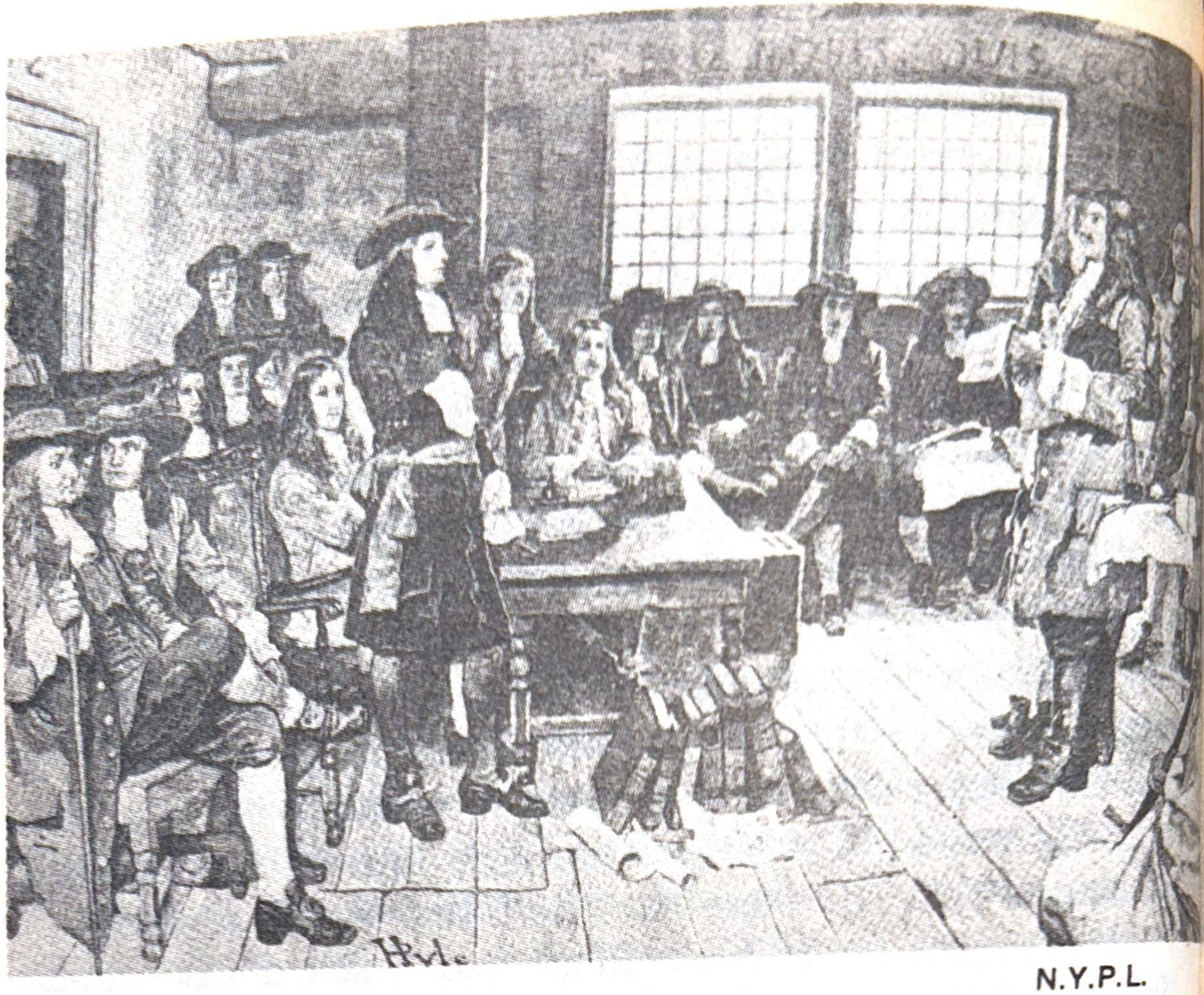
After securing the release of another group of imprisoned Quakers, he gave a great banquet for Irish officials and other people of quality. These people liked him so much, some of them even went to hear him preach. Sir William, however, was beginning to wish his son was with him. He wrote, "I wish you had well done all the business there and that you were here for I find myself to decline."

By August of 1670 William had finished his father's Irish business and returned to London. There he and his father became reconciled; Sir William finally seemed to understand what William was trying to do.

The London Quakers were in serious straits. There was a new vitality to the persecution of all dissenters; Quaker meeting houses had been boarded up and guards posted around them; Quakers were being taken off to prison in large numbers for violating a new law passed against them. It was important that a person of some prestige violate the law and force a test case regarding its validity. William Penn, Quaker and member of an important family, was the man needed. He stepped into the breach.

He addressed a group of Quakers meeting on the street outside their boarded-up meeting house. Upon his arrest he was taken off to Newgate prison, a foul place with horrible food and conditions which ruined the health of thousands of inmates. Immediately, he wrote to his father, explaining what had happened. The old man seemed to understand, but was deeply grieved because he knew his life was coming to an end and he wanted his son with him.

There was a trial, with great publicity about it all. The charge against him used such terms as: "with force of



N.Y.P.L.

Penn leading a Quaker meeting

arms," "unlawfully and tumultuously," "great terror and disturbance," "against the peace" of the "King, his Crown and dignity." William Penn was his own lawyer and argued for the rights of all Englishmen. A reading of the court record of the trial is fascinating, as the judge tried to "railroad" Penn into jail for a long, long time. But Penn convinced the jury of his innocence. When the jury pronounced him "not guilty" the judge attempted to punish the jury, which led to another landmark case.

William Penn demanded his release, but was fined for "contempt of court." He refused to pay the fine and was put back in Newgate. He believed he might be there for life because he would never pay the illegally assessed fine. He wrote to his father explaining it all, told him not to worry, that he was doing a thing that had to be done, and begged him to not pay the fine. Sir William, however, knew he was close to death and wanted his son with him in his last few days, so he paid the fine despite his son's objection.

William found his father truly on his deathbed. "Son William, I am weary of the world. I would not live over my days again, if I could command them with a wish; for the snares of life are greater than the fear of death. . . . Let nothing in this world tempt you to wrong your conscience; I charge you, do nothing against your conscience. . . ." It was a Quaker sentiment.

Sir William died September 16, 1670—now young William was William Penn, no longer the son of Sir William.

During the next ten years of his life William Penn was essential to the Quaker movement. He preached, he wrote, he led. He served prison terms—one of six months' duration—in his fight for liberty of conscience. He also married a young Quakeress named Gulielma Springett—after a courtship that lasted four years because Penn was so involved that there really had been no time. Penn described her as "good, wise, chaste, humble, plain, modest, industrious, constant, and undaunted." And so she must have been to survive twenty-two years of being wife to William Penn. Contemporary accounts say she was a most beautiful person and much sought after by other suitors. The difficulties of their marriage were extreme as William was harried, and imprisoned, and away for months at a time preaching on the continent. William and his Guli also suffered deep personal tragedy as their first three children died in early infancy. Their fourth and fifth lived—bringing them joy and comfort.

During those years William Penn occasionally gave thought to the establishment of a refuge for the Quakers—a colony in America. There was still one area in America that the English had done very little about colonizing: the land between New England and Maryland—a vast domain. The likelihood of the king granting it to Quakers was remote, but William Penn had a brilliant idea. Sir William had been very close to Charles II who had borrowed some large sums of money from him and had owed him a great deal of salary. This was common practice for kings in those times and Charles probably gave no thought to ever paying the debt, even though it amounted to the huge sum of sixteen thousand pounds. William decided to press—diplomatically—for Charles to pay the debt by granting him land in America. The Duke of York, the king's younger brother, had been an even closer friend to Sir William; they had served together in the Royal Navy. The Duke would help Penn's cause.

Charles received Penn's suggestion in good grace, for it would enable him to do something in memory of the departed Sir William, it would be a painless method of paying the debt—*and* it would rid him of at least part of his Quaker problem. No one in England was very excited about colonizing that middle area, so why not grant it to William Penn? Young William was eccentric about religious matters, but he was loyal to Charles, as Sir William had been.

The land was officially granted to William Penn on March 4, 1681, after he had been working months on the legal aspects, making certain the grant would include everything essential to making it a real refuge. The land alone would not guarantee it. He had to have full powers to establish the right form of government. Quakers had once held hopes that Jersey would be a refuge. Some of them had acquired land there, but without the powers of government it became a disappointment. This time, though, William Penn was made absolute proprietor of "ports, harbors, waters, soil, woods, mountains, all living things in the waters and forests, all precious minerals and gems that may be discovered." He was to be beholden only to the king and was to pay him two beaver skins per year, plus one-fifth of all gold and silver that might be taken out. Penn was given the power to make and publish laws, with the assent of the freemen, and appoint all of the government officials. Furthermore, he was entitled to all the rents collected from those who did not buy the land. There were only two restrictions: his colony could trade only with England; he could not make war, except in defense.

Now Penn was ready to make his dreams become reality. A frame of government was needed and he prepared one, with humility and apology. Everyone's ideal government was aimed at happiness, he said, "but in the means they differ." Also, the best frame would have to be altered according to what was needed in the particular time and place. He admitted he did not know what type of government was best but he was certain that "governments, like clocks, go from the motion men give them. . . . Let men be good, and the government cannot be bad; if it be ill, they will cure it. But if men be bad, let the government be never so good, they will endeavor to warp and spoil it to their turn."

It was his responsibility to work out a system of government, and he wanted to prove to the world that a country could succeed without having just one established religion, that a country could flourish under a system of religious freedom. He said his idea was a "Holy Experiment." Leaders would not have to take religious oaths; a "hireling ministry" was unnecessary. His government would have no religious persecution of "ridiculous dogmas or ritual." There would be complete religious liberty for all who believed in God. (This was not quite as much liberty as in Roger Williams's Rhode Island, where one did not even have to believe in God.)

William Penn's Quaker philosophy extended beyond considerations of liberty of conscience. He provided for amendment of the governmental framework when it was necessary. He included a process for impeachment of officials. There was to be no capital punishment except for murder and treason—in England and most other countries there was a lengthy list of crimes punishable by death. All children were to be taught a trade. Prisons were to be institutions for rehabilitating criminals rather than simply for punishment.

Penn was also concerned about the Indians. Land for use of white men was to be purchased—not just taken. Trading with Indians was to be done in public market, where they must be dealt with justly. Offenses against Indians or by Indians were to be heard, and decisions reached, by a jury of six Indians and six white men.

A frame of government was not all that was necessary to start his colony successfully. There were countless details. Fortunately, William Penn realized his colony needed publicity, and he may have been our first really great Madison Avenue type of promoter. He wrote and published numerous advertising brochures and sent agents to a number of countries as well as to all parts of England. He was frank and honest, listing the costs of transportation and warning people it would be no picnic. Only those people were wanted who would work hard to fashion success for themselves and for the colony.

William Penn was anxious to go to America, but if the "experiment" was to get off to a good start he still had many things to take care of in England. The first two shiploads of people left in the fall of 1681, and soon thereafter he sent a letter to the Indians of Pennsylvania:

There is one great God and power that hath made the world and all things therein. . . . Now this great God hath been pleased to make me concerned in your parts of the world, and the king of the country where I live hath given unto me a great province therein; but I desire to enjoy it with your love and consent, that we may always live together as neighbors and friends, else what would the great God say to us, who hath made us not to devour and destroy one another, but live soberly and kindly in the world.

Then he said he knew that people from his part of the world had been unkind and unjust and had taken advantage of the Indians, causing distress and bloodshed.

II

But I am not such a man, as is well known in my own country, I have great regards and love towards you, and I desire to win and gain your love and friendship by a kind, just and peaceable life, and the people I send are of the same mind, and shall in all things behave themselves accordingly; and if in anything any shall offend you or your people, you shall have a full and speedy satisfaction for the same, by an equal number of just men on both sides . . . I shall shortly come to you myself, at what time *we may more largely and freely confer and discourse on these matters; in the meantime I have sent my commissioners to treat with you about land and a firm league of peace; let me desire you to be kind to them and the people, and receive these presents and tokens which I have sent to you, as a testimony of my good will to you, and my resolution to live justly, peaceably and friendly with you.*

I am your loving friend,
William Penn

By August 1682 William Penn, the proprietor, finally had arranged his affairs so he could journey to the land of promise and of Indians. He and Guli had decided he should go alone; then she and the children would follow. He wrote many letters: to the Quakers who would still be in England, to his wife, to his children. He wrote with the grim possibility that he might never see them again. Ocean voyages were extremely perilous, and the colonies held many hazards.

To Guli he wrote:

My dear wife! remember thou wast the love of my youth, and much the joy of my life; the most beloved, as well as the most worthy of all my earthly comforts: and the reason of that love was more thy inward than thy outward excellencies, which yet were many. . . . it was a match of Providence's making.

He also wrote short letters to each of his children, bidding them to love God, be nice to each other, and read good books. That summer he was also busy writing a tract that is considered to be the greatest of all the things he wrote. *No Cross, No Crown* is a beautiful explanation of essential Quakerism—the true worshipping of God is doing God's will.

Late in August William Penn was ready to sail to the New World to do God's will there, as he saw it to do. He boarded the three-masted *Welcome;* three hundred tons, 108 feet long, square-rigged. About one hundred other Quakers were also en route to the colony now called

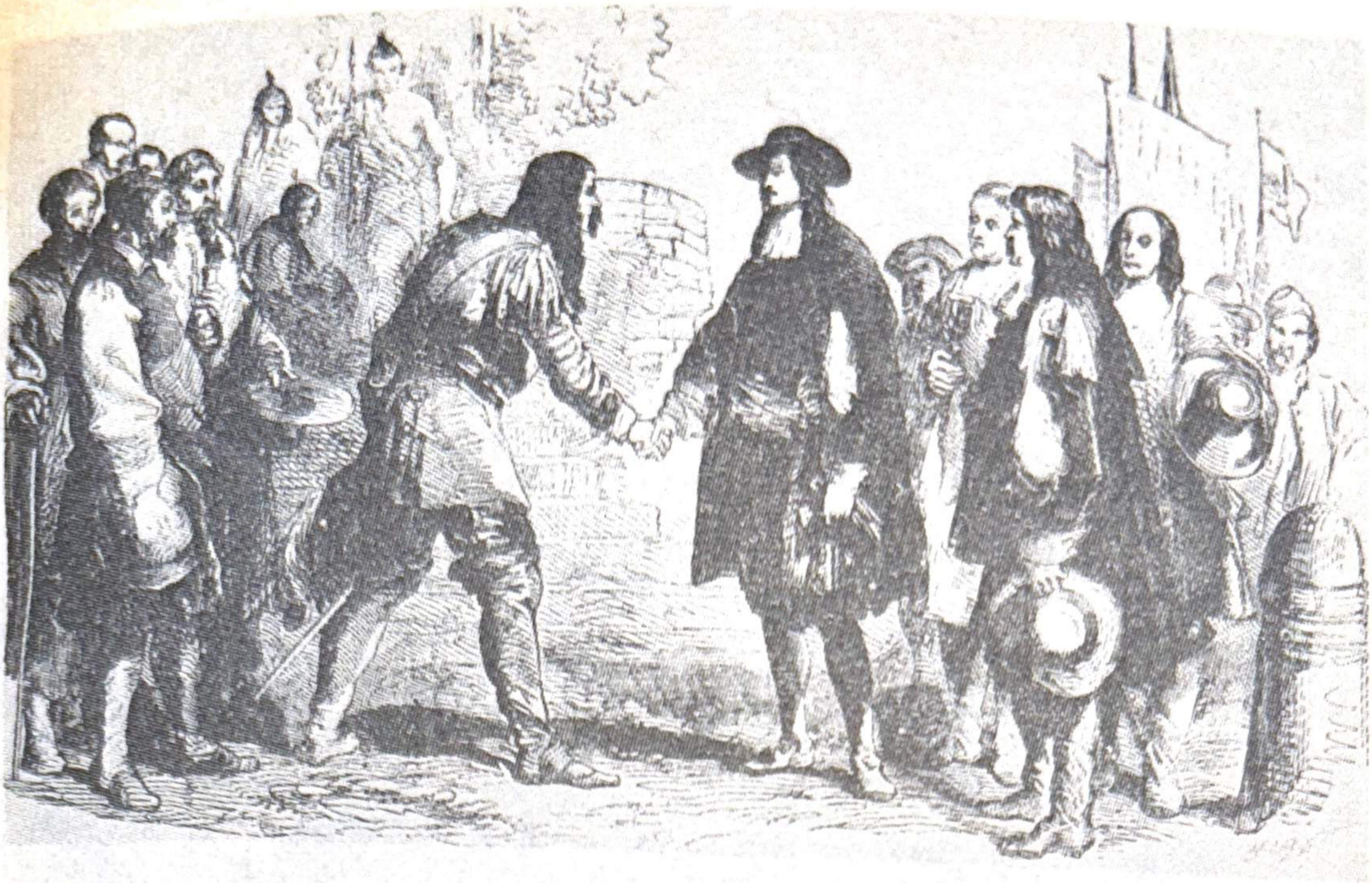
Pennsylvania—Penn's Woods—in honor of Sir William. There were worse voyages by far than the *Welcome*'s of 1682—the ship was not blown off course, and the weather was not too bad—but the dreaded scourge of smallpox swept through the ship. Those who had immunity from a previous bout with it—like Penn—cared for the stricken ones and comforted them. Thirty-one died and were buried at sea. And yet, a child was born when its time came to be born.

Nearly two months after weighing anchor at Deal, the *Welcome* dropped anchor in the Delaware River at the pioneer village of New Castle, where the river widens into the bay. William Penn was welcomed by the Dutch inhabitants who had settled there years before. They turned over possession of the town and presented Penn with a key to their fort. It was a peaceable friendly ceremony. Then the *Welcome* weighed anchor again and made way slowly up the Delaware to its temporary destination, the town of Upland, soon renamed Chester.

Again Penn was welcomed warmly, this time by English settlers, by Quakers who had arrived nearly a year before, and by many Indians who had come to see the great sachem—the one who had promised he would come among them. Penn was at his best in this kind of situation. He had the charm and flair of his cavalier background and yet the humility and modesty of the Quakers. Apparently Indians and whites alike found it impossible not to like the new proprietor.

Within a few days he went a little farther up the Delaware to see the site of what was to become his capital city. He had made great plans for it and he had instructed his representatives, who had arrived the year before, to choose a proper site. They had chosen well, indeed. The location had everything; it was on high banks of the river, it was healthy, there were good places for ships to anchor and good places to build wharves and piers. There were other rivers flowing into the Delaware nearby, including the big important Schuylkill. The area was beautiful. The Indians had loved it and used it; so had the Dutch.

Penn's plan for the city was already being put into



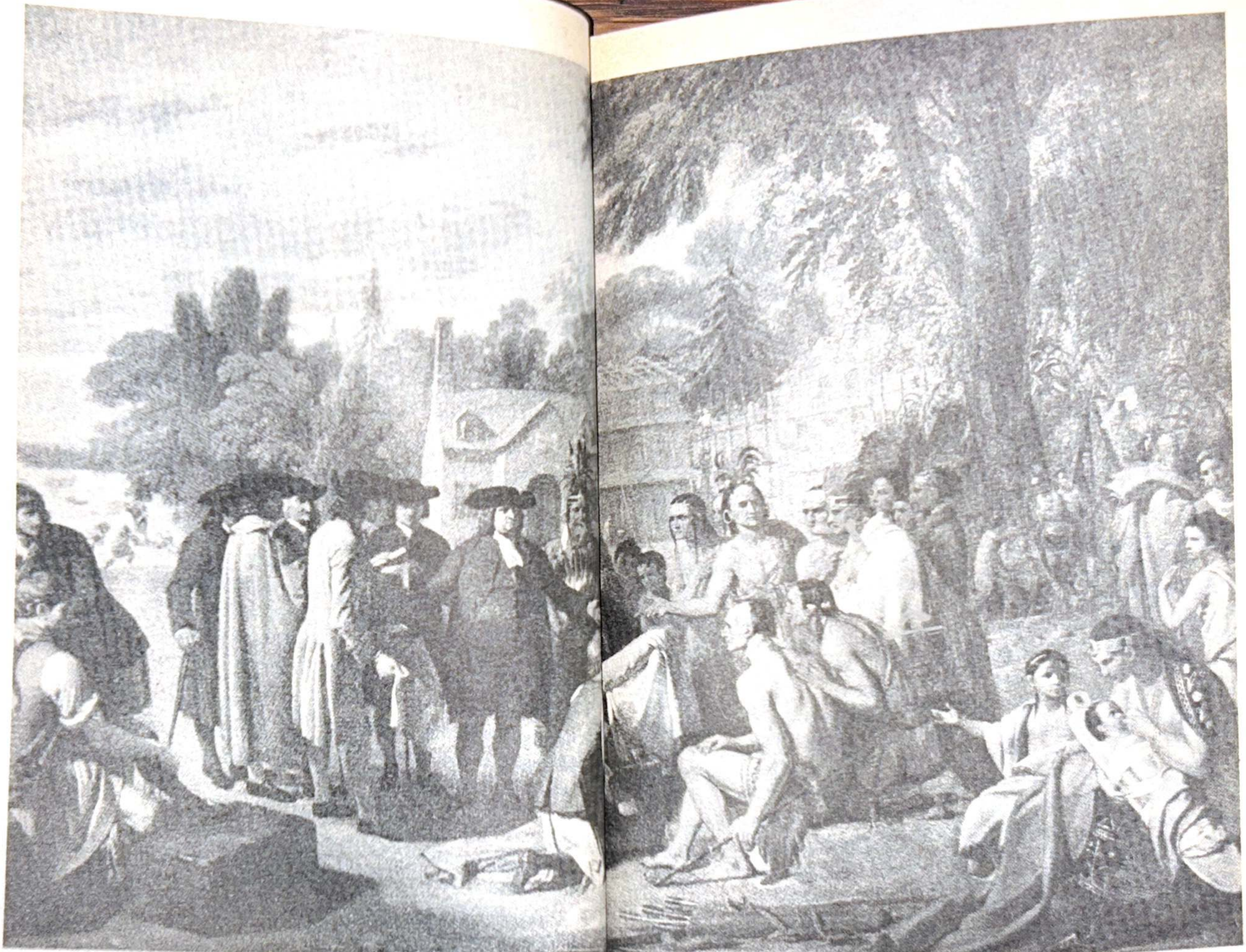
N.Y.P.L.

Penn and his party being welcomed by the Dutch at New Castle

operation. There were ten houses built so far and they were in a straight line. It was to be a city of straight streets—not like the maze of Old World cities. Each house would have enough land around it for trees, grass, and gardens. It was to be a "green country town" that would not be devastated by fire because the large lots and greenery would deter the spread of flames. It would, he prayed, be a city of brotherly love, so he named it Philadelphia. (*Philos,* in Greek, means love, and *adelphos* means brother.)

The land surely had everything to make the colony a place where people could work and prosper together in brotherly love. Penn saw great trees in a primeval forest, meadows covered with flowers, rivers teeming with fish and waterfowl. The indications of a wonderfully fertile land were everywhere. "Oh, how sweet is the quiet of these parts, freed from the anxious and troublesome solicitations, hurries and perplexities of woful Europe," he wrote. He was filled with happiness and hope.

Sometime within the first few weeks he held a great conference with the Indians. There is no documentary proof



Penn's conference with the Indians

PAINTING BY BENJAMIN WEST, COURTESY N.Y.P.L of the meeting, which disconcerts many historians, yet, it must have been held. The Indians talked about it for a hundred years. The whites talked about it and wrote about it. The great French philosopher and writer, Voltaire, wrote of it in 1764 in his *Dictionnaire Philosophique*: "William Penn began with making a league with the Americans, his neighbors. It is the only treaty between those nations and the Christians which was never sworn to and never broken." A woman who claimed to have witnessed the great meeting said William Penn endeared himself to the Indians by his "marked condescension and acquiescence to their wishes," and that Penn "sat on the ground with them and ate with them of their roasted acorns and hominy."

For many years Philadelphians treasured a great tree called the "Treaty Elm" under which Penn and the Indians met. The elm was eventually destroyed in a storm, but it stood near what is now the corner of Columbia and Beach streets. And in 1836, Peter Du Ponceau published a little book which indicates quite certainly that the conference was held. He quotes a Pennsylvania governor named Gordon who quoted from the treaty in a discussion with Indians fifty years later. Gordon stated that these were some of the Great Treaty provisions: 1) "The doors of the Christians' houses should be open to the Indians, and the houses of the Indians open to the Christians, and that they should make each other welcome as guests"; 2) neither Indians nor whites should believe false rumors about the others, they should "come as brethren" to inquire so there would be no misunderstandings; and 3) Indians and whites should assist each other against "wicked" whites and "wicked" Indians.

Unfortunately, in a way, Benjamin West painted the Great Treaty meeting as he imagined it would have appeared. In the now famous picture the Quakers were wearing the wrong style of clothes for that era, but *most* unfortunately he depicted Penn as a stout middle-aged man—with a blue sash. The blue sash Penn might have worn; he had a feeling for "occasions." He was, however, only in his late thirties at the time and we know he was still quite athletic. Several writers described how he watched the Indians in their contests of running and jumping and then beat their young men at their own game.

Whether or not there was a Great Treaty with the sachems of the Delaware tribe, there were many others of positive record. In his letters, Penn mentioned seven as records of land purchases in the first few months. In Pennsylvania land was never just expropriated. It was purchased, and the agreements had attached to them long lists of trading goods the Indians wanted, such as muskets, pots and pans, dry goods, needles, pins, hose, hats, ammunition, axes, and knives. The Indians liked the manner in which Penn conducted treaty negotiations because he did it their way. He traveled to *their* villages, lived with them for days at a time, ate their food, and lived according to their customs. Indians did not like to rush the making of treaties. Penn allowed them all the solemn deliberating they wanted. And he appreciated their ability to bargain, ". . . he will deserve the name Wise, that outwits them in any Treaty about a thing they understand."

Penn was wise himself; he determined at the outset that he should know their language, which he found to be "lofty but narrow . . . one word serveth in the place of three. . . . I have made it my business to understand it that I might not want an interpreter on any occasion." He wrote that the language of the Lenni Lenape (Delawares) was "sweet and melodious."

He seems to have had a genuine liking for the native inhabitants in his colony and he admired them. The men were "tall and strong, the women comely . . . the children very pretty: they all wear some clothes. . . . they tread strong and clever, and mostly walk with a lofty chin." He found "comely European faces among them." He did think them to be "in the dark" about religion, but was pleased to find they had a belief much like the Quakers'. They "believe in God and Immortality, without the help of metaphysicks."

Penn wrote: "I beseech God to incline the Hearts of all that come into these parts, to out-live the Knowledge of the Natives by a fixt Obedience to their greater Knowledge of the Will of God; for it were miserable indeed for us to fall under the just censure of the poor Indian Conscience. . . ." The Christians, he said, "learned them drunkenness . . . they are the worse for the Christians." Penn was no fool, though, and he cautioned those negotiating treaties for the purchase of land, "for they will sell one another's."

After William Penn had purchased land from the Delawares, and later from the Susquehannas farther to the west, he sold it to settlers or rented it to those without the funds to buy right away. Every person who wished to buy land had to sign an agreement. In it was this significant clause: "Noe man shall by any wayes or meanes in word or Deed, affront or wrong any Indian, but he shall incurr the Same Penalty of the Law as if he had Committed it against his fellow Planter. . . ." And if a white man had a complaint against an Indian he could not take the matter into his own hands. He had to make a complaint to the governor of the colony, who would then work out a settlement with the Indian sachem of that group. "Don't abuse them, but let them have Justice, and you will win them. . . . Be tender of offending Indians. . . . Lett them know you are come to sitt down lovingly among them. . . . Be grave, they love not to be smiled on." (Laughter was never a part of ceremonial or solemn situations among American Indians.)

Many white leaders professed love for the Indians. Some few may even have sincerely regarded them as brothers—equal brothers. William Penn believed the Indians were equal and put it into his treaties with them. "The Indians shall have Liberty to doe all things relating to ye improvement of ye ground and providing Sustenance for ye families that any of ye planters shall enjoy."

Penn not only believed Indians were equal "brethren" and that such a belief should be a part of the treaties, but he insisted that belief become policy, followed by all. That is the real difference between him and most other white leaders. He and his colonists traveled everywhere unarmed; there was not one soldier with a musket for many years.

There were disputes between Indians and whites, of course, but they were settled peacefully.

Peace with the Indians was one of the important attractions of Pennsylvania and it grew in population and prosperity. In three years Pennsylvania grew more than New York had in fifty. In the first year after Penn arrived fifty ships put in at Pennsylvania ports, eighty houses were built in Philadelphia, three thousand people came to make their lives in the Quakers' refuge—many of them non-Quaker and non-English. Many of the new settlers were people of means, industrious and thrifty. Some even brought frames of houses ready to erect. They started making bricks and for two hundred years Philadelphia was known as the city of brick houses. They decided the frame of government needed some revisions, and William Penn was happy to approve them.

He began the building of a manor house for his family and named it Pennsbury. It was erected on a beautiful site twenty miles up the broad Delaware. It was not to be a simple Quaker home but a manor for a cavalier: sixty feet across and forty feet deep, built of brick, with beautiful formal gardens, broad lawns, and appropriate shrubbery. It was still in the process of being built when William Penn made the difficult decision to return temporarily to England. He was having a serious dispute with Lord Baltimore about the boundary between Maryland and Pennsylvania. If Baltimore managed to get the boundary at the fortieth parallel Pennsylvania would lose most of her good access for ships. He could not let it happen, though it appeared it would unless he went back to fight it. Another reason he felt he should make the trip was that Guli had not been able to come to him. A child had been born after he sailed for America and Guli had never really regained her health. He would go home, settle the boundary thing, and bring his family to their new home.

He sailed from his beloved Pennsylvania in August of 1684, leaving his new and beloved refuge from "woful Europe" in the capable hands of people he trusted. With satisfaction he saw that Philadelphia now had 350 houses and 2500 people. Wharves and warehouses were being built rapidly. The colony of Pennsylvania already had 7000 white people, not one of whom had killed an Indian or been shot at by an Indian. He expected to be back among his American brethren soon.

The England to which he returned was indeed "woful." Charles was ruling without Parliament. Religious dissenters were harried and persecuted. But Guli was at last well again, and she could return with him to Pennsbury when he finished his business. The two of them made many plans for Pennsbury, and William began sending letters about changes and additions to be made there, such as: "a large brew house, in it an oven for baking and a stable for twelve horses. . . . handsome steps at the [river] landing. . . . the partition . . . should be wainscoted. . . . a rail and bannisters before both fronts. . . ." Many of the instructions are undoubtedly suggestions made by Guli.

William Penn, however, was not to see Pennsbury for fifteen years, and Guli would never make it her home. Politics in England began to tumble in various directions when Charles died and the Duke of York became James II. Penn had to resume his old role of liaison between the harassed Quakers and the government. He became a leader of the English and Irish Quakers again, precariously walking a tightrope as he worked to free the many Quakers imprisoned because they insisted on worshipping God in their own quiet contemplative manner. In order to work for them effectively he had to pay court to James and remain his friend, for which he was criticised and misunderstood. He was giving his life to the Quaker cause, making successful missionary tours of the continent, and again being imprisoned—once for six months.

By 1692, Penn had another cause of concern. Guli's health began to deteriorate. She was approaching fifty years of age and she seemed to expect and to be ready for what was happening. In the latter part of 1693, Guli had resigned herself to death and no one could help her. "I submit to His holy will," she said. On February 23, 1694, she asked everyone to leave the room except William, and together the two of them spent her last hours. She died in William's arms. "We took our last leave. . . ."

Guli's death was the most damaging blow of a series of frightful calamities that assailed William Penn during this era. After James II was deposed by William and Mary, Penn was accused of treason and thrown into the Tower again. This time, however, he was cleared of the charge and released in two weeks. His Pennsylvania was taken from him and administered by the crown for two years before it was returned to him. His own financial situation was in desperate straits throughout most of this period. With so many pressing problems on his mind he had been careless about business accounts. Pennsylvania land sales and rentals were bringing him very little money and his expenses were so great that his vast New World empire of 45,000 square miles was actually impoverishing him. In addition, his Irish land holdings were being so cleverly and dishonestly handled by a man he trusted implicitly, that Penn was falling into serious debt there too; but still he was not willing to take the time to check the accounts. His carelessness about the accounts in Ireland finally climaxed in a many-years battle to prevent the scheming villain there from taking over all of Pennsylvania. In April of 1696, he suffered a blow almost as staggering as Guli's death. His dearly loved eldest son died, "breathing his last on my breast. . . . so ended the life of my dear child . . . much of my comfort and hope . . . my friend and companion, as well as most affectionate and dutiful child."

Fortunately, one good thing happened in those distressing years. He fell in love again, with Hannah Callowhill who was a warm, gentle Quaker maid twenty years younger than he. They were married a month before Penn's son died, and she was a great source of strength to that man so buffeted about.

During all of those bad years William Penn had continued to dream of returning to Pennsylvania. It finally became possible when William III instituted a policy of religious liberty. Quakers were no longer being imprisoned, and Penn no longer had to play the half-Quaker, half-courtier role of liaison. So William Penn, with his wife and daughter this time, sailed on September 3, 1699, bound for Philadelphia. It was a long tedious voyage of three months.

The monotony of the voyage was quickly forgotten when the Penns reached the Delaware. First there was a grand welcoming at Chester. Then at Philadelphia people came from many miles around to see the man who was a living legend to Pennsylvanians. He still had a flair for the cavalier dramatics and was rowed ashore with dignity and pomp. He found the whites and the Indians had not forgotten the man of love. Philadelphia had grown into a thriving bustling city of five thousand people. There were seven hundred homes, mostly brick, and all with green plots around them—as he had planned. There were still no forts, no militia. Indians and whites were neighbors.

There was, however, political trouble. Quakers and non-Quakers disputed about politics and policies, and the three southern counties fought the northern counties. William Penn plunged into the turmoil and made great strides in ameliorating the contentiousness of the groups. Pennsbury had been allowed to deteriorate, but restoration and improvement were started quickly, and within a short time it became his "seat" again. The best thing he found upon his return was the excellence in the Indian relations. He held a great council with forty chiefs representing the Delawares, Susquehannas, Shawnees, Potomacs, Conestogas, and Onondagas. There was reaffirmation of the policy never to injure or defraud one another. The Indians agreed to obey the laws of Pennsylvania. Penn agreed to protect the Indians from trade abuses and to continue the policy allowing Indians to settle wherever they chose. Then there was an exchange of gifts.

William Penn was happy. He rode throughout the area unarmed, enjoying the peace afforded by the great forest. He bought a compass so he wouldn't need a guide. When he visited Indian villages it was as the honored guest—for several days at a time. And Indians were always welcome at Pennsbury, though Hannah never ceased to be surprised to find them squatting by the great fireplaces.

As long as William Penn was in Pennsylvania he was happy and the colony ran smoothly. He was an excellent diplomat and statesman. When he was away from Pennsylvania he was unhappy and Pennsylvanians quarreled and bickered among themselves. Unfortunately for him and them, his second sojourn lasted only two years. He had to return to England, again he thought for a short time. There was a strong thrust in Parliament to take over all colonies and have them administered as royal colonies, and this Penn couldn't let happen. Pennsylvania might well cease to be a refuge for Quakers and dissenters from Europe; then he could never prove that a country based on love, tolerance, and good will could succeed. He had to go back to block the plan, to employ all his old skills, to use his Penn family influence again—for the cause.

The Penns sailed in November of 1701, after William had approved a new frame of government giving more power to the common man in Pennsylvania, and after he had assured a delegation of Indian chiefs that he would never change his policy toward Indians.

London was the same old center of turmoil and political intrigue. The bill to put all colonies under the crown's jurisdiction was thwarted, but Penn was not free to return to Pennsylvania. He was horribly in debt and the unscrupulous man who had managed his Irish holdings so fraudulently was pressing him to pay the £14,000 he claimed Penn owed—or turn over Pennsylvania to him. The fight to save Pennsylvania took years of dreary court proceedings until, finally, the man's fraud was exposed. Sadly, Penn had many other debts and he was forced to the horrible expedient of trying to sell Pennsylvania to the government. The government expressed an interest in the deal, but was not willing to accept all the conditions Penn stipulated about the religious and civil rights of his settlers and the Indians.

Before the details of the transaction could be settled William Penn suffered a stroke. The sale was never consummated. Fortunately, Hannah during these years was always a source of comfort and strength and she bore William five children, one of whom was born while he was in prison during the debt proceedings.

In 1712 Penn experienced another stroke—a year after the first. He recovered, but very slowly, and in 1713, he was stricken again. This time his recovery was a physical one only. His body was healthy but his memory was defective and his speech was slurred and halting. Hannah cared for him with great love and tenderness. His friends came often to visit. He declined slowly and died July 30, 1718—among gentle Friends and family.

The "Testimony of Reading Quarterly Meeting" spoke of him thus: ". . . learned without vanity, apt without forwardness . . . an extraordinary greatness of mind . . . void of the strain of ambition . . . A man, a scholar, a Friend, a minister. . . ."

William Penn had fought religious bigotry in an era when it threatened to destroy civilization. Almost alone he fought to prove that Indians and white men not only could live in peace, but could live together as brothers and neighbors—with love.

Tennyson said William Penn was "the fixed light of a dark and graceless age shining on into the present."

William Penn
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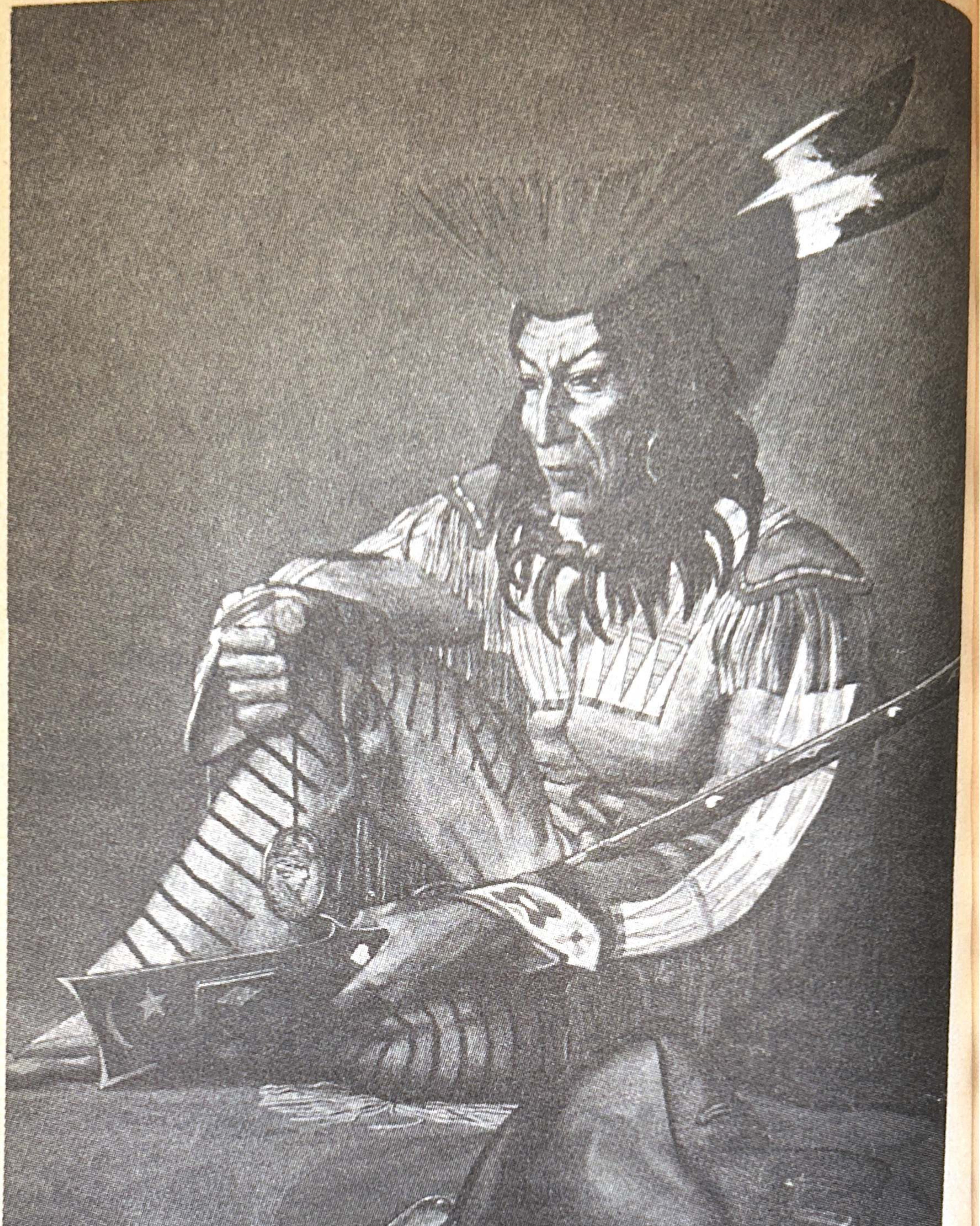

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Tecumseh

Chapter 3

TECUMSEH

Comet in the Midnight Sky

THE BATTLE was finished. The invading Virginia frontiersmen had left, victorious. An Indian mother led her six-year-old son to the place where his father had fallen in a valiant death. Kneeling beside the dead chief's body she cried out to her son, "Avenge! Avenge!"

When the son was twelve years old he was still too young to fight, and had to watch the invading army of George Rogers Clark defeat his people and burn his town. He was filled with bitterness and swore vengeance on the white Long Knives.

The destroyed town, Old Piqua, had been a large one, stretching three miles along the Mad River—near the present city of Springfield, Ohio. It was where the boy, Tecumseh, was born in 1768. His father, Puckeshinwa, was a Shawnee chief of the Kiscopoke clan; his mother was either a Creek, or a member of the Shawnee clan of the Turtle. Puckeshinwa, who had been elected chief because of his prowess as a hunter and a warrior, was a compassionate man. His mother was a scolding, tumultuous woman full of hatreds—who bore the chief five sons and three daughters. Her name was Methoataske which means "turtle laying eggs in the sand." She instilled in all her sons an implacable hostility to the white man. Then she took one of her daughters and left the Shawnees—going somewhere to the South and to complete obscurity.

Tecumseh's later boyhood was spent under the care of an elder sister, Tecumapease, whom he loved, and an elder brother who taught him as the dead chief would have taught him: as a Shawnee.

The Shawnees were superlatively proud. They believed the great Creator was an Indian, that he made the Shawnees before he made any other human race, that he made them from his brain and gave them all the knowledge he possessed. They believed that he later made the other peoples from other parts of his body. (The Long Knives were made from his hands.) They believed that all other Indians were descended from the Shawnees. Their beliefs made them a haughty, arrogant people. Their terrible ferocity in battle made them the most feared of the tribes in the old Northwest Territory when the whites began to settle there.

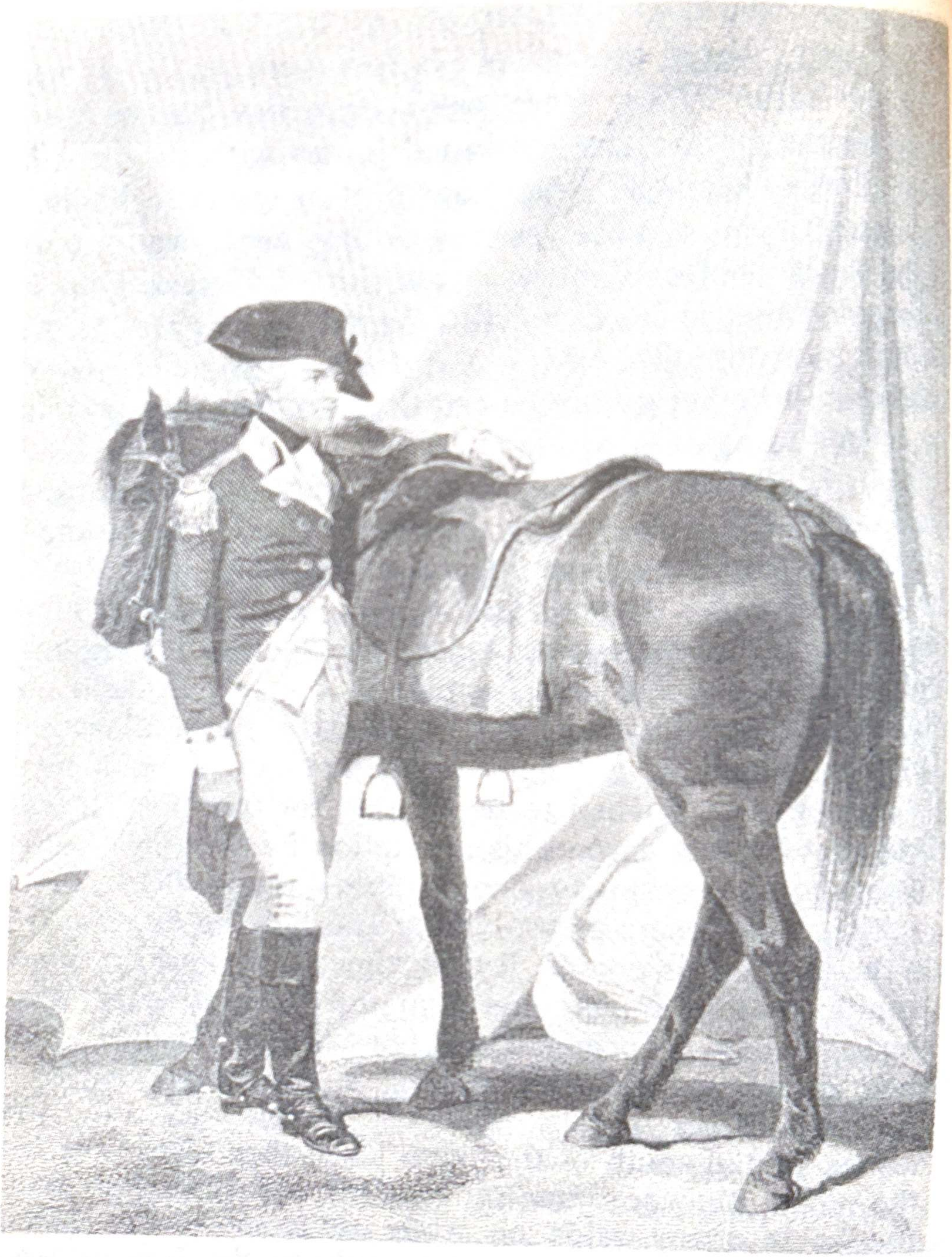
Tecumseh was a true child of his tribe. His name was originally Tecumthe—literally translated into "I cross somebody's path." The white man's use of his name slowly changed it to Tecumseh, and allegorically came to mean something like: "a panther springing upon its prey," also "shooting star" because romanticists who wrote about him could see that a comet flashing through the heavens was like a panther flashing from the limb of a tree toward its prey. Even as a small boy he must have shown indications that he was to be something more than just another brave Shawnee warrior. His father saw great promise in him. Just before the chief died from his battle wounds he made his eldest son, Cheeseekau (who had been fighting at his side), promise to care for the six-year-old boy and to instruct him.

Cheeseekau spent much time with the boy, instructing him in the lore of the Shawnees, in the skills of hunting, and in the arts of war. He grew into youth and manhood with what seem to be contradicting ideas and emotions. He held within him a bitter hostility to the white man, and yet he loved a white girl. In battle he killed relentlessly, preferring to take no captives, but he permitted no torture of prisoners that were taken. A man of action, he was also an orator and a lover of Shakespeare. He seemed to hold a disdain for women, but on several occasions defended them from abusive husbands. As a youth he drank much of the white man's whiskey, but later he practiced complete abstinence and insisted that all of his followers do the same.

In the early 1780s there were ceaseless battles and bloodshed as the Indians combined forces with the British in an effort to keep the Americans east of the Alleghenies. Tecumseh, in his middle years of adolescence, was a part of the warfare, often fighting at the side of Cheeseekau. It is recorded that in his first battle he fled, a coward. Some historians dispute this, saying that it is just too much out of character. Whether or not he ran the first time, it is certain he never ran again.

In 1787, when he was nineteen years old, Tecumseh went south with Cheeseekau to help the Cherokees in their attempt to stop the encroachments of the white man. While he was there he participated in a mounted buffalo hunt which became a furious escapade. As he chased a big bull buffalo his pony fell and Tecumseh's leg was broken. He was forced into inaction for many months. Later, Cheeseekau was killed in a Cherokee frontal attack on a fort. Tecumseh then seemed to be fighting for two men. It was then that he first earned his reputation for fighting boldly, furiously, and recklessly; constantly risking his life.

After three years of wandering and fighting he returned to the land of his people. By this time, of course, the white Americans had fought and won the Revolutionary War, started a new government, elected George Washington as their president, and were moving in great numbers down the Ohio River to take up land—Indian land. First the whites settled south of the river. Then they turned toward the north, Shawnee country. In 1791 and 1792 Tecumseh fought in many raids on white settlements. He helped destroy two armies sent out to subdue the Indians who were fighting for their lands. Finally, the Washington administration sent Major General Anthony Wayne to train an army and to force the Indians to allow the white men to settle on their hunting grounds. This general was the first one the Indians couldn't make a fool of. He defeated them decisively once, and then, in 1794, crushed them in the great battle at Fallen Timbers near Fort Miami, which



N.Y.P.L.

General Anthony Wayne

is close to what is now the city of Maumee, Ohio. In this battle Tecumseh was the greatest rallying force the Indians had. He continually stopped retreats, inspiring the Indians to stand and fight. But he couldn't prevent the defeat.

The next year General Wayne called the chiefs to a council and the Treaty of Greenville was drawn up. Mad Anthony, as the general was called, acquired for the whites all of what is now the state of Ohio and part of what became Indiana. Tecumseh would not be a part of giving away his people's lands.

By 1795 he was considered a chief—at the age of twenty-seven years. There was a time of peace and Tecumseh was temporarily controlling his animosity. He was a great hunter, but some of the Shawnee braves challenged him to prove it. A contest was arranged. The winner would be the one who could bring back the most deer pelts after a three-day hunt. Shooting Star brought in thirty pelts. His nearest rival had twelve. Most of them had three or four.

By this time he had also established a reputation for being kind and generous toward those who were poor, old, or with no rank. When winter approached he was seen helping the old and the sick to patch up their tepees. He brought them food, and he invited them to share his meals with him when he brought back something particularly choice from the hunt. He was especially concerned when he saw a woman being mistreated, and by this time of his life had on several occasions intervened when he saw a man abusing his wife. Once he stopped a man who was beating his wife and told him that "no man who in anger strikes a woman has a right to call himself a warrior."

Tecumseh's own relations with women are difficult to ascertain. The findings of various researchers do not tell the same story. Several of the historians writing in the early 1900s say that Tecumseh had several wives (which was in keeping with the polygamous custom of the Shawnees), but that he apparently had no real love for any of them. According to these authorities he sent them on their way for the slightest bit of inefficiency—one because she couldn't make him a pouch just the way he wanted it; another because she had not properly dressed a turkey when he had invited friends to share a turkey roast with him. One of the writers says that he lived with one wife, White Wing, for five years. Supposedly, he always gave these wives handsome presents and dismissed them with a laugh.

Recent biographers, notably Glenn Tucker in his well-researched *Tecumseh, Vision of Glory,* say that Tecumseh was married but once; that at the age of twenty-eight he succumbed to pressures from the tribe and from his friends to end his blissful bachelorhood, and despite his hatred for whites he briefly courted and married a woman named Manete, who was half-white. There is nothing to indicate that she was beautiful, although some writers have said she was. Original sources describe her simply as an "old woman." At any rate, we do know that Manete bore him a son, who was quite fair-skinned. Tecumseh left the boy with Manete—although he had divorced her—until the boy was seven or eight years old. Then he took the child from her and put him in the keeping of Tecumapease, the boy's aunt who had helped Cheeseekau raise Tecumseh. His marriage to Manete seems to have been a short, drab, cheerless relationship.

On the other hand, there is considerable substantiation for the story that he was deeply in love with the daughter of a frontiersman named James Galloway. During the years of truce Tecumseh was an occasional guest at the home of Galloway. This white man was supposed to have many of the attributes of Daniel Boone. (Tecumseh knew and respected Boone, although the two were enemies.) Galloway also was a man of books and brought many with him to his frontier cabin. As his daughter Rebecca began to ripen into a young woman of beauty, Tecumseh became a frequent visitor at his friend's house. Rebecca was an exceptional girl; she could speak the Shawnee language, and she was a reader of her father's books. She began to help Tecumseh with his English—he already knew some English because of his close association with Billy Caldwell, a captive white boy with whom he grew up. She read to him from the Bible and he was fascinated by the Book of Exodus, especially the story about how the waters parted for the Children of Israel. She read Shakespeare to him; *Hamlet* was his favorite play. He also liked the story of Alexander the Great. Rebecca talked a great deal about humaneness, and about how much more effective reason was than tomahawks and scalping knives.

Tecumseh called this girl Star of the Lake and brought her many presents. Finally, although she was only about sixteen years old and he was about thirty, he asked James Galloway if he could marry her. Galloway said it was up to Rebecca. Rebecca said she could not live the life of an Indian—would Tecumseh be willing to give up his way of life? Tecumseh replied that he would go away and in a month come back with his answer.

There could be only one answer, of course. Tecumseh was an Indian—in whose eyes could be seen already the vision of a burning mission. He returned to Rebecca in a month and gave her his answer; he never saw her again. There can be little doubt, however, that the deep emotional involvement he had with the white girl must have remained within him the rest of his life. It is unlikely that he could have found an Indian woman who would have fascinated him as Rebecca did, and he probably did not marry again.

During the years after the 1795 Treaty of Greenville there was unrest on the frontier. If an Indian stole from, or murdered, a white man he was quickly brought to justice—white man's justice. If a white stole from, or murdered, an Indian he *might* be tried in the white man's court, but frontier juries seldom found a white man guilty when accused of harming an Indian.

Tecumseh saw these things and spoke out against them. He was much more concerned, however, with what was happening to the Indian's lands. Between 1795 and 1809 the whites had taken another fifty million acres of hunting ground—and it was not by war. This invasion Tecumseh saw as a much more insidious maneuver that would prove more difficult to stop. The governor of the Americans' Indiana Territory, William Henry Harrison, was highly adept at gathering in council those chiefs who were susceptible to whiskey and oratory and who would then sign away land, several million acres at a time. Often the land they ceded did not even belong to their tribes. General Harrison described the chiefs at one of these councils as "the most depraved wretches on earth."

Tecumseh spoke again and again to the Indians, and to the whites, in protest against this treacherous procedure. He insisted that this violated the provisions of the Treaty of Greenville. In 1806 he protested mightily in a large council. For three hours he held his audience captive with a tumult of oratory. He related the details of every important treaty that had ever been drawn up between the Indian and the white man—beginning with Jamestown and Plymouth. He cited each provision of each treaty, and told exactly how the white man had violated them. His knowledge of these treaties was nearly incredible, especially since he had never read them.

His oratorical ability was tremendous. Interpreters quailed at their task. One of them wrote that Tecumseh's ideas and manner of presenting them were "so grand, lofty, and powerful" that he "could not begin to reproduce them." Lewis Cass, who was greatly involved in this era and area, said that Tecumseh's bravery was possessed in common with his tribesmen, but "his oratory speaks more for his genius." It was generally agreed on the frontier that Tecumseh's gift of speech could only be compared with that of Henry Clay.

Oratory did not stop the encroaching white settlers, however, and in 1805 something happened which Tecumseh was to use to great advantage. The youngest brother of Tecumseh, Elskwatawa, had been a wastrel—much addicted to the white man's whiskey and to wild ways. In 1805, however, Elskwatawa had a vision. In this vision it had been shown to him that the white man was a debilitating force on the Indians, and that he, Elskwatawa, was chosen to lead the Indians back to the ways of their ancestors. He changed his name to Tenskwatawa (the Prophet) and began a great religious crusade, preaching complete abandonment of everything the white man had brought to the Indians. Especially did he preach against the evil effects of whiskey. The fame of Tenskwatawa spread as he traveled far distances with his message. His following increased until his influence extended from Saskatchewan to Florida.

Tecumseh was quick to see the possibilities of using this religious fervor. (He agreed with what his young brother was preaching—becoming a teetotaler himself.) When the crowds gathered to hear the Prophet, Tecumseh talked about forming a great Indian confederacy to stop the advance of the whites. He had undertaken the great mission of saving his people and would lead them in a crusade to save their land; this would be their last real chance to fight to be free. The program was to reform the Indians' habits, to prevent their giving away their land, to keep them apart from the whites, and to form a confederacy that would include every tribe in United States territory.

Within three years great progress had been made. Tecumseh and the Prophet decided to found an Indian town as headquarters for their operations. They received permission from the Potowatomis and the Kickapoos to use land where the Tippecanoe River flowed into the Wabash River. It came to be known as Prophetstown or The Great Clearing.

In the meantime General Harrison was proceeding with his efforts to obtain land by using oratory and whiskey—plus annual annuity payments. In 1809 he collected some of his "depraved wretches" and fashioned the Treaty of Fort Wayne with the Delawares, Miamis, Potowatomis, and a few other tribes—adding many square miles to Indiana Territory.

Tecumseh decided that it was time for action. Although the Shawnees did not own these lands he believed that no Indian could give away land without the consent of all the Indians. Early in 1810 he persuaded some of the tribes to refuse the annuities—indicating abrogation of the treaty. William Henry Harrison was much concerned and invited Tecumseh to attend a council at his headquarters in Vincennes. Tecumseh agreed to a talk and said he'd bring along thirty chiefs and warriors. Before the Indians arrived at Vincennes on August 12, Harrison's scouts reported that Tecumseh had four hundred with him—not thirty. Harrison was worried and told Tecumseh to send away the large

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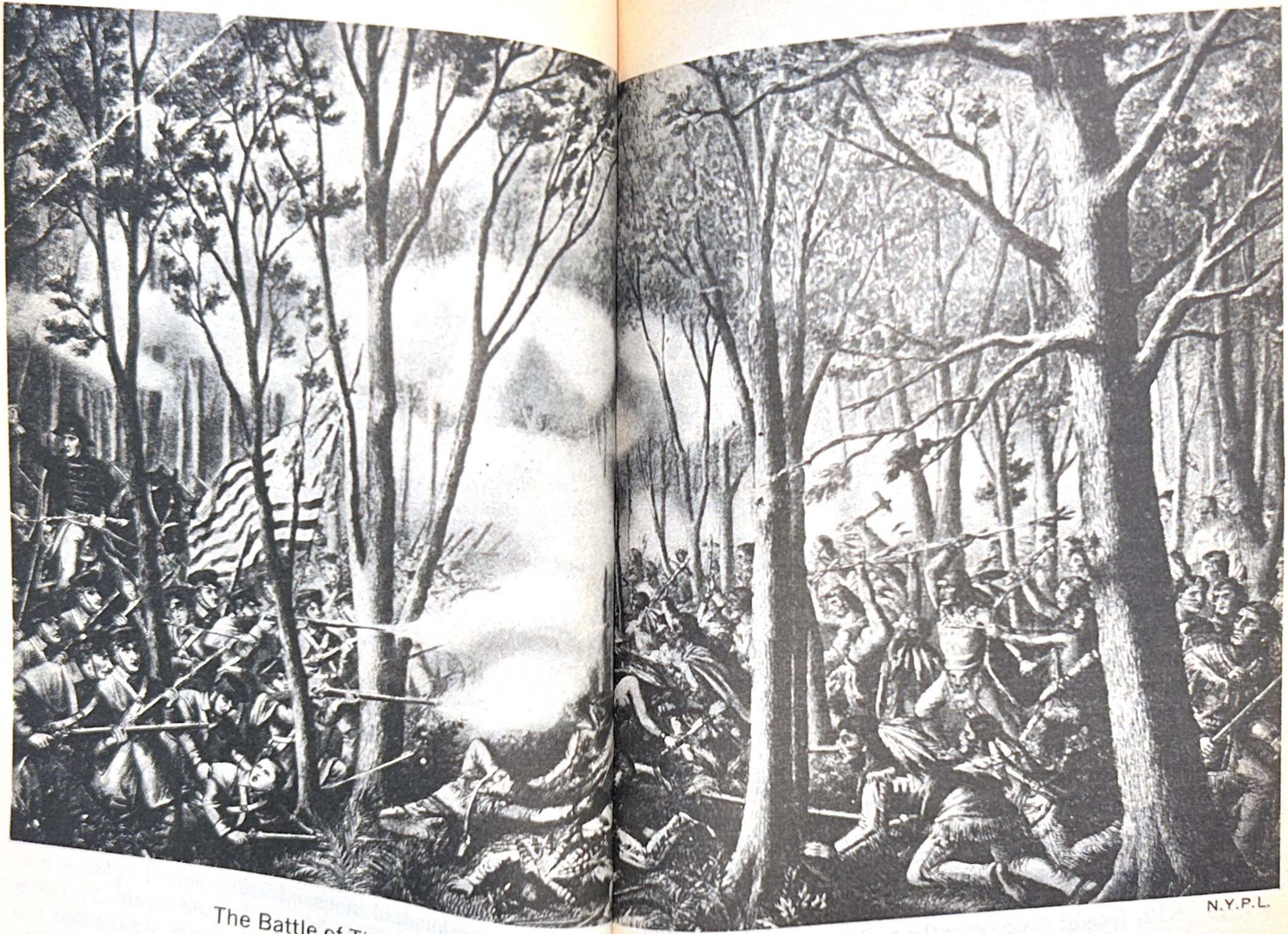


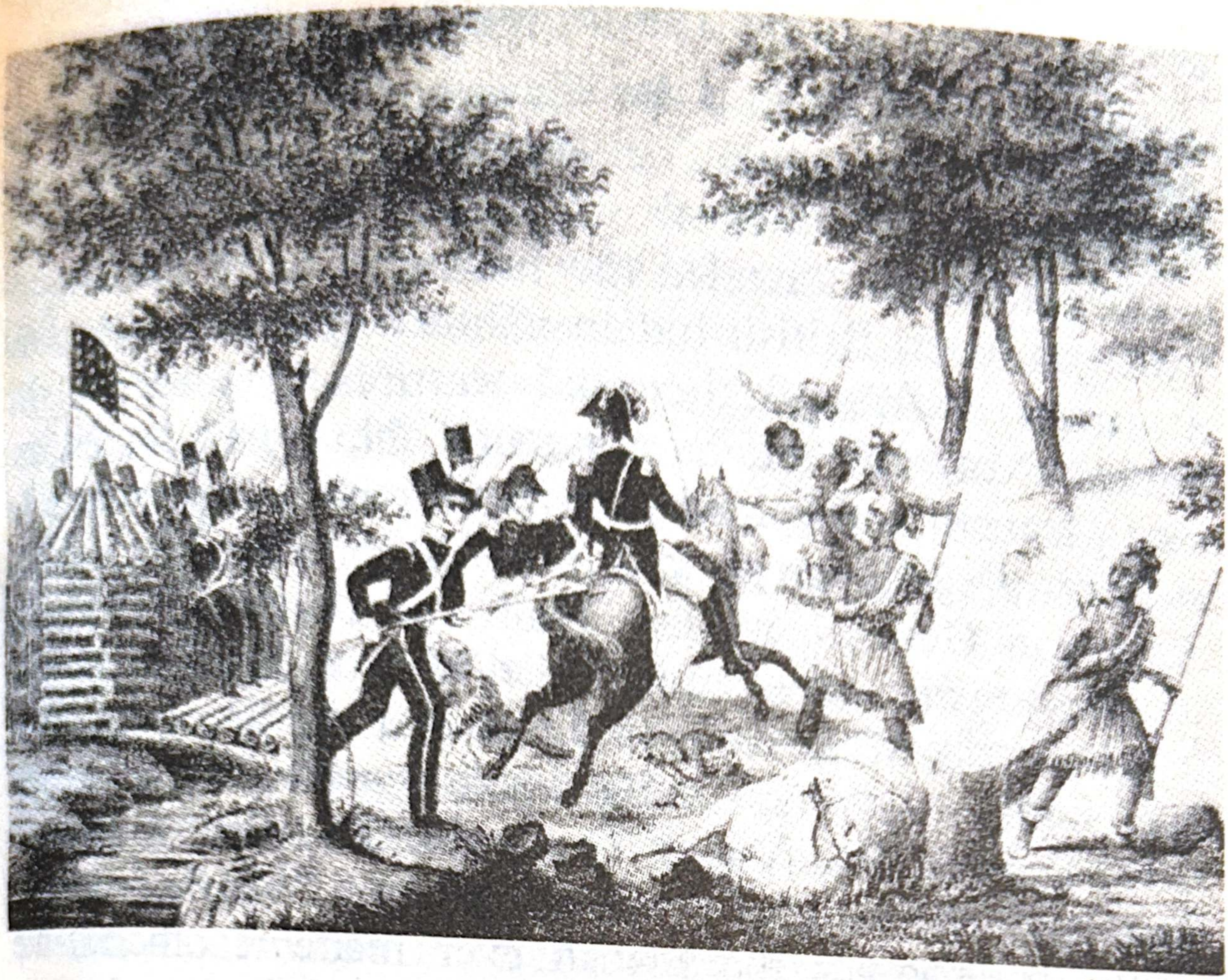
The Battle of Tippecanoe

N.Y.P.L.

and void, and went south to add to the strength of the confederacy. Harrison had flung a direct challenge at him and he must take it up. He had already told Harrison, "The Indians were once a happy race, but are now made miserable by the white people, who are never contented but always encroaching. They have driven us from the great salt water, forced us over the mountains, and would shortly push us into the lakes. But we are determined to go no farther." Tecumseh had resolved that the whites had broken their last treaty that was supposed to last "as long as the sun shall climb the heavens, or the waters run in the streams."

Now Secretary of War William Eustis sent reinforcements to Harrison with the message to keep peace if at all possible, *but* to attack Prophetstown if the threat was really serious and if he couldn't break up the headquarters by peaceful means. In those days it took three weeks for mail to reach Vincennes from Washington, and Harrison had already made his plans. He wrote Secretary Eustis that many of the Indians in Prophetstown were there because they were just too frightened of Tecumseh to leave. So if the headquarters were attacked while Tecumseh was gone those Indians would leave the confederacy. Harrison added that Tecumseh was "one of those uncommon geniuses which spring up occasionally to produce revolutions and overturn the established order of things."

On August 7, 1811, General Harrison issued an ultimatum to Tenskwatawa, the Prophet, to the effect that if the headquarters town was not broken up, and unless certain "murderers" were delivered to Harrison, he would consider the Prophet's Indians to be hostiles. The consequence of the ultimatum would be the first battle of the war of 1812, fought seven months before the United States declared war on Britain. The general was determined to start hostilities. On November 6 he moved eight hundred men toward Prophetstown. The Indians knew he was approaching and undoubtedly could have ambushed him had they wanted to do so. When the army was within two miles of The Great Clearing, Chief White Horse was sent out to talk. He told Harrison that the Indians had com-



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The battle at Fort Meigs

mitted no hostile act, but the presence of the troops would certainly cause trouble. After some discussion it was agreed that Harrison and Tenskwatawa would talk the next day. Then Harrison moved his troops right up to within a few hundred yards of the Indians, and camped for the night. There is little doubt that if trouble could be had Harrison meant to have it.

No one knows exactly how the battle of Tippecanoe started—whether the Prophet ordered an attack, or whether it was started by a few braves who felt the affront was too much to stomach. At four in the morning, with a few war whoops, an attack was launched. The Indians had the best of the going at first. Harrison reported that it was a "fierce battle." The troops finally drove off the Indians. The losses were high on both sides. The next day Harrison moved to attack the town, but was surprised when he found it deserted; he burned it. The confederacy was destroyed. The war in the Old Northwest had begun. In June the United States declared war on Britain, and Tecumseh allied himself with the Redcoats. It was his only chance, he felt, to stop the advance of the Americans. He didn't know, or wouldn't accept, that it was already midnight for the Indian cause.

Tecumseh commanded the Indians in all of the important combined British-Indian military operations. He had as many as several thousand warriors in some of the battles. Not only did he command the Indian forces, he also planned, and helped plan, battles and campaigns. The successful campaign to take Fort Detroit from the elderly American General William Hull was Tecumseh's. Those historians who have studied the War of 1812 as it was fought in the West seem to agree that the two most brilliant soldiers—perhaps in the whole war—were the British General Isaac Brock and Tecumseh. The British offered Tecumseh the rank of brigadier general. Whether he accepted it, whether the British ever made it official, we don't know. We do know, however, that he seemed to be indefatigable. He fought at Brownstown, Fort Meigs, Detroit, Pigeon Roost, Fort Harrison, Fort Madison, Fort Wayne—everywhere, it seemed.

General Henry Procter, Tecumseh's unfortunate and incapable superior, had decided to lay siege to Fort Meigs, which was commanded by William Henry Harrison. The decision was a poor one and the siege was unsuccessful. At one juncture, however, Tecumseh sent this message:

General Harrison: I have with me eight hundred braves. You have an equal number in your hiding place. Come out with them and give us battle. You talked like a brave man at Vincennes, but now you hide behind logs and in the earth, like a groundhog. Give us answer. *Tecumseh*

Later, American reinforcements arrived at Meigs under Colonel William Dudley, a young, brave Kentuckian. He was driving the British before him. However, Tecumseh brought in his Indians, surprising Dudley's troops. Out of 800 Kentuckians only 170 escaped death or capture. Tecumseh came upon a large mob of Indians in a hysterical mood. He discovered they were indulging in a general massacre of the captives. He forced his way through the mob and grabbed two of the leaders and threw them to the ground. Standing there amidst the bloodthirsty hysteria, he said he would kill the next one who harmed a prisoner. The massacre was stopped. Tecumseh soon discovered that General Procter was right there and had not even attempted to prevent the killing. When Tecumseh asked why he hadn't done something, Procter answered that the Indians couldn't be commanded. Tecumseh exploded, "Begone! You are unfit to command; go and put on petticoats."

In 1813 Procter had control of the Detroit area, but in September Oliver Hazard Perry's little fleet defeated a small British fleet near Put-in-Bay, Lake Erie. This changed the complexion of the war in the northwest. Control of the Lakes by the Americans made the British positions untenable. Procter realized that he must evacuate the area and retreat toward Niagara Falls. Tecumseh could not accept this decision for it meant the end of his plan to save the land for his people. He railed at Procter. A copy of the oratorical invective was later found among the papers of a British officer. Here is some of what Tecumseh said:

> *Listen!* When war was declared our father stood up and gave us the tomahawk, and told us that he was now ready to strike the Americans; that he wanted our assistance, and that he would certainly get us our lands back, which the Americans had taken from us.
>
> . . .
>
> *Father, listen!* Our fleet has gone out; we know they have fought; we have heard the great guns, but know nothing of what has happened to our father with one arm. Our ships have gone one way, and we are much astonished to see our father tying up everything and preparing to run away the other, without letting his red children know what his intentions are. You always told us to remain here and take care of our lands. It made our hearts glad to hear that was your wish.

> Our great father, the king, is the head, and you represent him. You always told us you would never draw your foot off British ground; but now, Father, we see you are drawing back, and we are sorry to see our father doing so without seeing the enemy. We must compare our father's conduct to a fat animal that carries its tail upon its back, but when affrighted, it drops it between its legs and runs off.
>
> *Listen, Father!* The Americans have not yet defeated us by land; neither are we sure that they have done so by water—we therefore wish to remain here and fight our enemy, should they make their appearance. If they defeat us, we will then retreat with our father. At the battle of the Rapids, last war, the Americans certainly defeated us; and when we retreated to our father's fort in that place, the gates were shut against us. We were afraid that it would now be the case, but instead of that, we now see our British father preparing to march out of his garrison.
>
> *Father!* You have got the arms and ammunition which our great father sent for his red children. If you have an idea of going away, give them to us, and you may go and welcome. Our lives are in the hands of the Great Spirit. We are determined to defend our lands, and, if it is his will, we wish to leave our bones upon them.

Tecumseh's plea was to no avail. Procter left Fort Malden—near the mouth of the Detroit River—and retreated in a northwesterly direction. William Henry Harrison was chasing him. At the Thames River Procter decided to make a stand (perhaps Tecumseh persuaded him). He formed his seven hundred British troops in open order, with Tecumseh and two thousand Indians in a swamp to protect his right flank. Harrison was coming up with three thousand troops.

Prior to the battle Tecumseh said to his braves: "Brother warriors, we are now about to enter an engagement from which I shall never come out; my body will remain on the battlefield." He then unbuckled the British sword he was wearing and, removing all evidence of the British officer he probably was, he handed the sword to Chief Naw Kaw, saying, "When my son becomes a noted warrior give him this." (The son did later become an officer in the British army.)

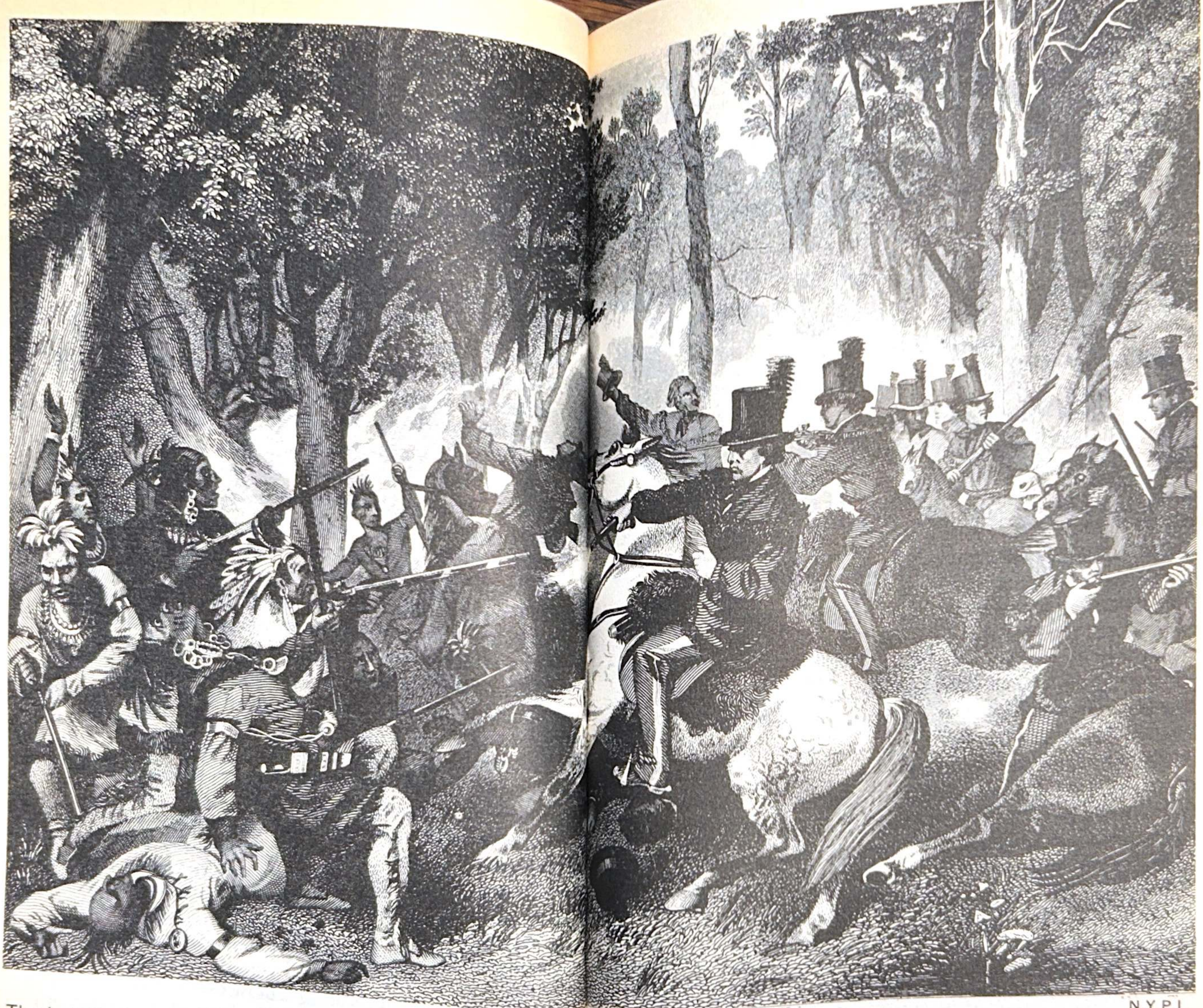
Still waiting for the battle to be joined, Tecumseh was talking to some of his Shawnee warriors and told them not to elect his son a chief because he was "too fair-skinned, too much like a white man."

The Americans arrived. Harrison sent his mounted rifles against the British regulars formed in open order. They burst through immediately and the soldiers surrendered in panic. Procter was fleeing on horseback when the opening charge was made. (He made his escape down the Thames and the Americans couldn't catch him, although they did capture his carriage with all his papers in it.) Harrison could now turn all his forces against the Indians. The first attack was repulsed. The "terrible voice" of Tecumseh could be heard above the din of battle telling his braves to stand firm. The American, Colonel Richard Johnson, led his men toward the Indians who were clustered around Tecumseh. The fighting was fierce, hand-to-hand—tomahawk, saber, and rifle.

Chief Naw Kaw later told how Tecumseh was "wounded again and again." Blood was pouring from his mouth, but he continued to load, shoot, and reload his rifle, calling to his men to stand firm. He staggered in his weakness from loss of blood. Finally he went down. A Potowatomi chief said, "Tecumseh fell dead and they all ran."

When Tecumseh fell it was suddenly past midnight for the Indians who were fighting mankind's old fight—the fight to be free. It is true, however, that some Indians continued the hopeless battle against the invading whites. The last large Indian uprising was put down in 1886 when the Apaches finally were forçed to accept their inevitable fate.

Tecumseh had been in almost every major engagement with the whites since 1791. Yet he died at the age of only forty-five. His domain had been huge—one half million square miles, far larger than that of any other great



The battle of the Thames, in which Tecumseh was killed

N.Y.P.L.

Indian; none ever controlled so much territory or wielded so much power. The stamp of greatness was on him. He had unusual dignity—Colonel Johnson in the confusion of battle had spotted him quickly, although he wore no decorations, only his simple Shawnee deerskin hunting clothes. He was a patriot, a military hero, a statesman, an orator, a great American.

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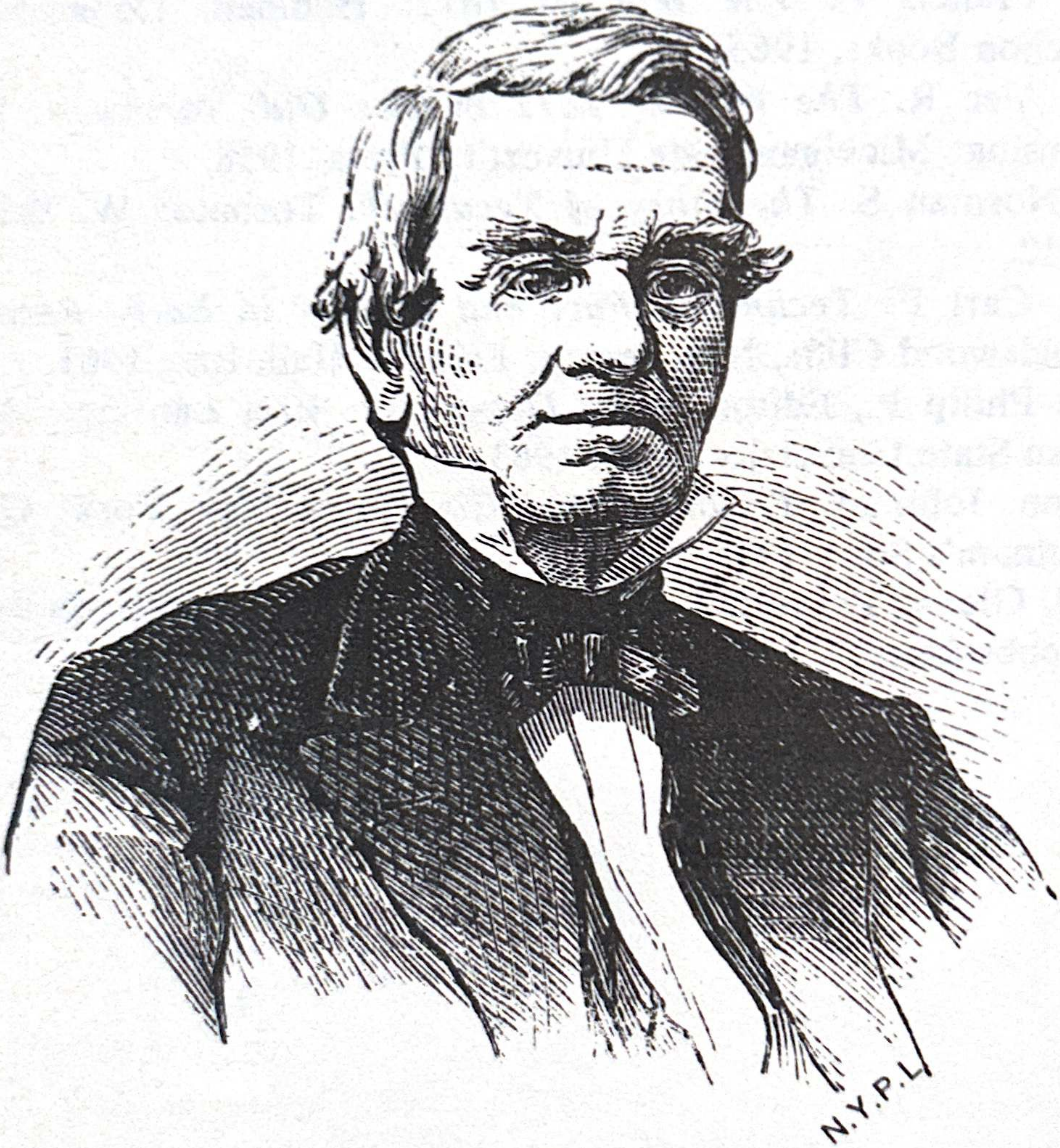


John Ross

Chapter 4

JOHN ROSS

Civilized Warrior

THE SEIZURE of their lands had become an old story to American Indians. But the people of the Cherokee Nation had resolved that it should not have to go on and on. In 1759 they'd been led in battle—defending their lands—by the Little Carpenter, Attakullakulla. Decisively defeated, they'd ceded more land. In 1763 they'd been forced to accede to the Treaty of Augusta: ceding of more land. In 1787 and 1788, having obtained guns from Spain, they'd fought again, with hideous barbarities perpetrated by whites and Indians alike. By 1791 they'd signed another treaty—ceding all of their lands east of the Appalachian Mountains.

Now it was that they resolved to bring an end to the repetition of horrors, and deaths, and heartbreak, and the westward movement. The white man's complaint had always been that the Indian would not settle down to live in a civilized manner. If that complaint were to be removed, there should be no more fighting, dying, losing, and migrating. These Indians would take up the white man's ways.

The Cherokees formed the Nation to govern themselves. It was recognized by the United States. They built houses like the white man's; they built roads; they received missionaries. They kept the peace. One observer wrote that they had: "horses and cattle, goats, sheep, and swine. They raised maize, cotton, tobacco, wheat, oats, and potatoes, and traded with their products in New Orleans. They had gardens, and apple and peach orchards. They had built roads and kept inns for travelers. They manufactured cotton and wool. One of their number had invented an alphabet for their language. They had a civil government, imitated from that of the United States."

Many of the Nation's people became prosperous; some became wealthy. Many of them were educated; some were scholars. Within forty years most of the children could read and write their native tongue, and many were equally adept in English. Some of the men had developed great cotton plantations, with showplace mansions.

The Nation's constitution, modeled after that of the United States, was written mostly by one man, John Ross —or Cooweescoowee, "the egret." Ross was only one-eighth Indian. His maternal grandfather was John McDonald, who had been a Tory agent among the Chickamaugas during the Revolutionary War. McDonald married a girl who was half-Indian, and he became a successful trader among the Cherokees after the war. Cooweescoowee's father was Daniel Ross, who'd come from Scotland with his parents. As a young man Daniel had come West to fulfill a dream of living and trading among the Indians. He'd been captured by Cherokees and was about to be killed, when John McDonald had successfully pleaded for his life. Daniel was taken into John's trading post business, and then he married John's daughter, Molly.

John Ross was born in 1790 and, like all of Daniel's children, was raised like a white aristocrat. But like the rest of his brothers and sisters he preferred to be an Indian. He was sent East to be educated, but returned to his chosen people—with his books and his knowledge. He became a successful trader and a plantation owner. His library contained books about statesmanship, history, manufacturing, engineering, and the lives of famous soldiers and leaders.

John married a full-blooded Indian named Quatie, an intelligent, Christian girl with a fragile and delicate beauty. He became interested in the politics of the Nation and was elected president of the national council when he was only twenty-seven years old. As one of the leaders in the movement to obtain a written constitution he was elected head of the committee for that task. He was thirty-seven years old when he was elected president of the convention that was to ratify the new document.

From that time, John Ross was the elected symbol of the People. Wherever he went the citizens of the Nation would stop whatever they were doing and form lines to take his hand. He was elected president of the council and held the position for many years. (The council was an elected body that had the power to make and execute general policies, although many issues had to be voted on by all the citizens.)

In the year 1828 the members of the council found much to be concerned about regarding the political situation in the United States. It was a presidential election year, and if Andrew Jackson defeated John Quincy Adams it meant trouble for the Cherokees. The council knew Jackson's philosophy about the Indians' place in the scheme of things. Jackson was a frontiersman, with the typical frontier attitude about the red man. He believed that conflict between the Indians and whites was just part of the natural order of things; that it would go on until the weaker group was destroyed or dispossessed; all Indians not destroyed would have to be moved west of the Mississippi. The Cherokees, however, had stopped their warfare against the white man nearly forty years before, and they did not plan to be destroyed, nor had they any intention of leaving their well-developed lands.

But Andrew Jackson *was* elected. In his first message to Congress on December 8, 1829, the new president left no doubt about what action he wanted Congress to take regarding Indians who still lived east of the Mississippi: All Indians were to be subject to the laws of the state in which they lived. All Indian lands—except those being farmed—were to be yielded to the states. Congress was to appropriate money to be used to help move the Indians west—although he wouldn't forcibly remove them. If they moved to the West, he said, their only obligation to the United States would be to keep peace.

Jackson's message didn't fool the Cherokees. He'd said he wouldn't forcibly remove the Indians, but they knew how the United States had maneuvered these things before—by getting a treaty through bribery, whiskey, or other fraudulent methods involving a few weak chiefs, and then pretending it was a valid one. The Nation's council members began a program centered around one idea. Unity! "United we stand, divided we fall"—borrowed from the whites—was repeated over and over to the People. If no one succumbed to oratory or bribery, if no one signed a treaty, if they remained united, they could win.

How could this trouble with the Indians east of the Mississippi still be occurring by 1829? After all, the great Indian confederacy of Tecumseh had been destroyed during the War of 1812. The answer lies in the pattern of the white advance. In the Northwest the pioneers had steadily pushed the Indians to the west. In the South, however, the whites had settled along the rivers that provided transportation for cotton and tobacco. This procedure had left large groups of Indians living between the river systems. Most of them belonged to what came to be known as the "Five Civilized Tribes": Cherokees, Choctaws, Creeks, Chickasaws, and Seminoles. There were about sixty thousand people in these tribes—the Cherokees numbered around fifteen thousand.

During the War of 1812 the Cherokees had elected to stay out of Tecumseh's confederacy. They believed the best interests of the Indian lay in "civilizing" himself—following the white man's ways. They even volunteered to help the United States troops, commanded by General Jackson, in putting down the Creeks. As a matter of history it was the Cherokees who made possible the victory for Jackson at the decisive battle at Horseshoe Bend. John Ross had been a prominent fighter that day, and chief Junaluska had saved Jackson's life when he'd been at the mercy of a Creek warrior.

After the Creeks had been defeated, the Nation's warriors returned to their farms, plantations, and businesses. They returned feeling they had proved that their loyalties lay with the civilized ways of the white man. But there were too many white men who didn't care about loyalties because they'd been looking at Indian lands with covetous eyes.

The Civilized Tribes held about thirty-three million acres, and the people, especially the poor whites, known as Georgia crackers, could see that much of the land in Georgia was being used only for hunting. Back in 1802 the crackers began pressuring their state government to do something about acquiring these lands that were held by nobody but Indians. After all, the white population was growing more dense, and more land was needed for cotton growing. A succession of Georgian administrations had been busy with the problem, so that by 1827 most of the non-Cherokee Indian land had been acquired for the whites.

But the Cherokees presented a real problem. A series of treaties beginning in 1785 had recognized the Cherokees as an independent nation, a nation that could own lands, make peace and war, and govern itself completely—including punishing its own criminals. Not all Cherokees, however, had decided to stay on ancestral lands now surrounded by the white man. Most of the People living in Tennessee had moved west of the Mississippi shortly after the War of 1812. When the Cherokees in Georgia didn't follow their example, the state began a campaign to destroy the idea that they really constituted an independent nation. And finally, in 1828 Georgia passed a Law providing: 1) all whites on Cherokee territory are subject to state laws; 2) all Cherokees are subject to state laws; 3) all Cherokee laws are null and void.

The Cherokees vigorously protested that such a law was unconstitutional, and when Andrew Jackson was inaugurated he found waiting on his desk a petition against that Georgia law. President Jackson, however, was not impressed with petitions made by Indians. He made his views clear in that December message to Congress already detailed above. His request for action was rewarded in a few weeks with a bill providing one-half million dollars to be used in aiding the Cherokees who would willingly go west.

Then the Georgia legislature went to work again. It passed such hated laws as: 1) contracts between whites and Indians must be witnessed by two whites (this applied retroactively and meant that all previous such contracts were invalid if the white chose to make it so); 2) an Indian could not testify against a white man in court; 3) Cherokees could not dig for gold, even on their own lands.

It was this matter of gold that was bringing on the immediate crisis. Authorities do not agree on exactly how the white man found out about the presence of gold on Cherokee land. There does seem to be agreement that a small Cherokee boy found a gold nugget in a stream—unwittingly accelerating the intensity of the white man's desire for Cherokee lands. A horde of lawless fortune hunters descended on the gold area—near present-day Dahlonega and Dalton, in Georgia. The white Georgia Guard ordered the Cherokees from their own gold fields. The Cherokees flew into a rage when the guard cursed them and prodded them with rifles and pointed sticks. Fighting ensued, and Cherokees were arrested and thrown into filthy jails. They were tried by unscrupulous judges who handed out harsh sentences, sentences dictated by the avaricious Governor John Forsyth.

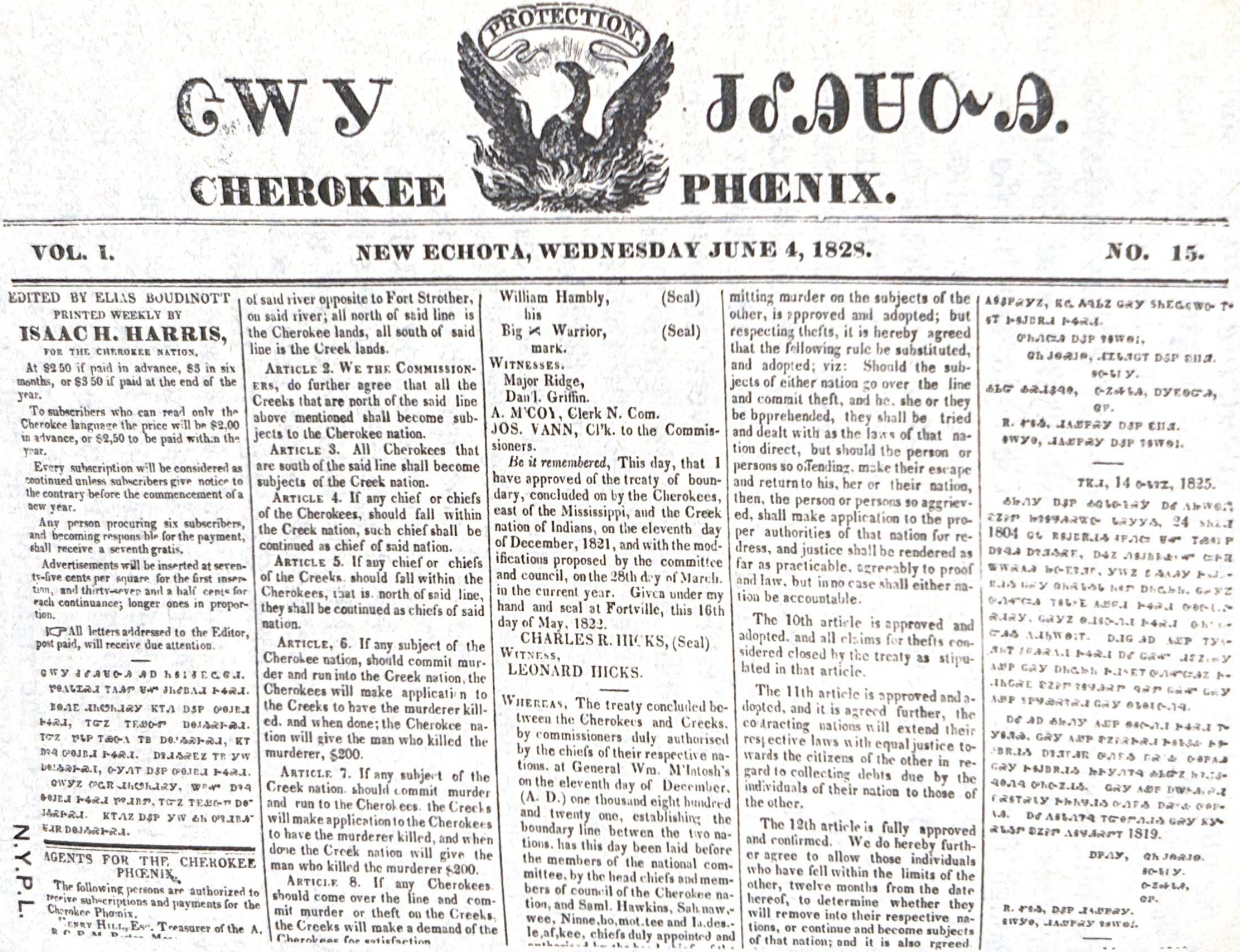
Not all white men in the United States agreed with the policies of Forsyth and Jackson. When the Indian Removal Bill was being debated in Congress there was fierce opposition to it, both inside and outside the legislative chambers. William Wirt—famous constitutional authority and attorney general under Monroe and John Quincy Adams—was disgusted and spoke openly and vigorously against it. Ministers in many pulpits all over the country urged its defeat in their sermons. In the Senate the great Daniel Webster angrily and bitterly opposed it. In the House the Honorable Horace Everett's speech on May 19 typified the views of the bill's opponents:

Sir, this policy cannot come to good. . . . It is all unmingled, unmitigated evil. . . . The evil, Sir, is enormous; the violence is extreme; the breach of public faith deplorable; the inevitable suffering incalculable. Do not stain the fair name of the country. . . .

The bill, however, was passed—by a slim majority. The Cherokees' problems were multiplying and intensifying. Although forbidden by a new Georgia law to do so, they called a meeting of the legislative council. The council, with John Ross presiding, passed resolutions and laws. Among the resolutions one declared that "Inclination to remove from this land has no abiding place in our hearts, and when we move we shall move by the course of nature to sleep under this ground which the Great Spirit gave to our ancestors and which now covers them in their undisturbed repose." The council also gave John Ross more power and more money to fight for the People's rights in court. Then the council apparently decided that preaching unity might not be enough. It passed tough laws: 1) any Cherokee who accepted the United States's offer to emigrate west of the Mississippi would forfeit tribal membership; 2) any Cherokee who sold his land in order to move west would be flogged; 3) any Cherokee who voted to sell any tribal lands would be put to death.

When John Ross returned to his large two-story home (near present-day Rome, Georgia) he found a letter from Jeremiah Evarts. Evarts had written a digest of the advice offered by Webster, Wirt, and the famous New York lawyer and judge, chancellor James Kent. The gist of the letter was, by all means to get the Cherokees' case to the Supreme Court. It was a clear case, all the great lawyers agreed, the rights of the Nation would be upheld. And William Wirt would act as counselor if the People wanted him to do so.

John Ross went to Washington, D.C., to work with William Wirt on the case of *Cherokee Nation vs. State of Georgia,* which did, indeed, reach the Supreme Court. In January 1831 the great Federalist Chief Justice, John Marshall, handed down the shocking majority opinion that



PROTECTION.

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CHEROKEE PHŒNIX.

VOL. I. NEW ECHOTA, WEDNESDAY JUNE 4, 1828. NO. 15.

EDITED BY ELIAS BOUDINOTT
PRINTED WEEKLY BY
ISAAC H. HARRIS,
FOR THE CHEROKEE NATION.

At $2 50 if paid in advance, $3 in six months, or $3 50 if paid at the end of the year.

To subscribers who can read only the Cherokee language the price will be $2,00 in advance, or $2,50 to be paid within the year.

Every subscription will be considered as continued unless subscribers give notice to the contrary before the commencement of a new year.

Any person procuring six subscribers, and becoming responsible for the payment, shall receive a seventh gratis.

Advertisements will be inserted at seventy-five cents per square for the first insertion, and thirty-seven and a half cents for each continuance; longer ones in proportion.

☞All letters addressed to the Editor, post paid, will receive due attention.

AGENTS FOR THE CHEROKEE PHŒNIX.

The following persons are authorized to receive subscriptions and payments for the Cherokee Phœnix.

of said river opposite to Fort Strother, on said river; all north of said line is the Cherokee lands, all south of said line is the Creek lands.

ARTICLE 2. WE THE COMMISSIONERS, do further agree that all the Creeks that are north of the said line above mentioned shall become subjects to the Cherokee nation.

ARTICLE 3. All Cherokees that are south of the said line shall become subjects of the Creek nation.

ARTICLE 4. If any chief or chiefs of the Cherokees, should fall within the Creek nation, such chief shall be continued as chief of said nation.

ARTICLE 5. If any chief or chiefs of the Creeks should fall within the Cherokees, that is north of said line, they shall be continued as chiefs of said nation.

ARTICLE, 6. If any subject of the Cherokee nation, should commit murder and run into the Creek nation, the Cherokees will make application to the Creeks to have the murderer killed. and when done; the Cherokee nation will give the man who killed the murderer, $200.

ARTICLE 7. If any subject of the Creek nation should commit murder and run to the Cherokees. the Creeks will make application to the Cherokees to have the murderer killed, and when done the Creek nation will give the man who killed the murderer $200.

ARTICLE 8. If any Cherokees should come over the line and commit murder or theft on the Creeks, the Creeks will make a demand of the Cherokees for satisfaction

William Hambly, (Seal)
his
Big ⋉ Warrior, (Seal)
mark.
WITNESSES.
Major Ridge,
Dan'l. Griffin.
A. M'COY, Clerk N. Com.
JOS. VANN, Cl'k. to the Commissioners.

Be it remembered, This day, that I have approved of the treaty of boundary, concluded on by the Cherokees, east of the Mississippi, and the Creek nation of Indians, on the eleventh day of December, 1821, and with the modifications proposed by the committee and council, on the 28th day of March. in the current year. Given under my hand and seal at Fortville, this 16th day of May, 1822.

CHARLES R. HICKS, (Seal)
WITNESS,
LEONARD HICKS.

WHEREAS, The treaty concluded between the Cherokees and Creeks, by commissioners duly authorised by the chiefs of their respective nations. at General Wm. M'Intosh's on the eleventh day of December, (A. D.) one thousand eight hundred and twenty one, establishing the boundary line betwen the two nations. has this day been laid before the members of the national committee, by the head chiefs and members of council of the Cherokee nation, and Saml. Hawkins, Sah,naw,-wee, Ninne,ho,mot,tee and Ia,des,-le,af,kee, chiefs duly appointed and

mitting murder on the subjects of the other, is approved and adopted; but respecting thefts, it is hereby agreed that the following rule be substituted, and adopted; viz: Should the subjects of either nation go over the line and commit theft, and he. she or they be bpprehended, they shall be tried and dealt with as the laws of that nation direct, but should the person or persons so offending, make their escape and return to his, her or their nation, then, the person or persons so aggrieved, shall make application to the proper authorities of that nation for redress, and justice shall be rendered as far as practicable, agreeably to proof and law, but in no case shall either nation be accountable.

The 10th article is approved and adopted. and all claims for thefts considered closed by the treaty as stipulated in that article.

The 11th article is approved and adopted, and it is agreed further, the contracting nations will extend their respective laws with equal justice towards the citizens of the other in regard to collecting debts due by the individuals of their nation to those of the other.

The 12th article is fully approved and confirmed. We do hereby further agree to allow those individuals who have fell within the limits of the other, twelve months from the date hereof, to determine whether they will remove into their respective nations, or continue and become subjects of that nation; and it is also agreed

N.Y.P.L.

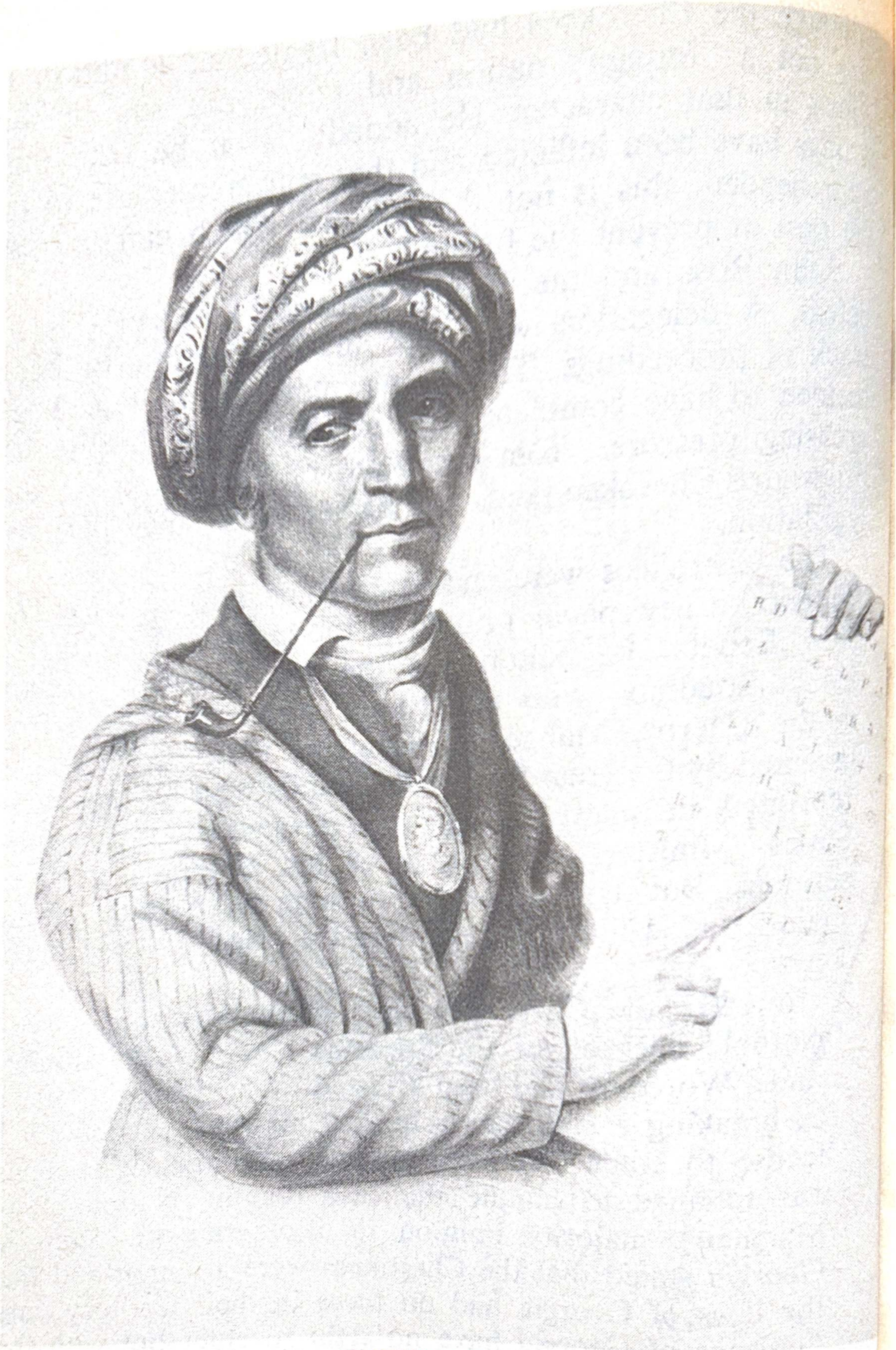
The bilingual Cherokee newspaper, the "*Phoenix*" although the Cherokees had been treated as a nation it was not a "foreign" nation and could not sue in the courts in that character. He added: "If it be true that wrongs have been inflicted and that still greater are to be apprehended, this is not the tribunal which can redress the past or prevent the future."

John Ross and the People refused to accept this as defeat. A delegation was kept in Washington to keep track of proceedings. The People remained united. They seemed to have complete faith in John Ross, despite increasing pressures from the State of Georgia as it appropriated Cherokee lands and passed more anti-Cherokee legislation.

The Cherokees were encouraged and informed by *The Phoenix*, a newspaper printed in the capital village called New Echota. Its editor was the well-educated Indian, Louis Boudinot, who printed the paper in English and in the Cherokee language, using the Cherokee alphabet invented by the great Sequoyah. Boudinot's editorials were reprinted in many newspapers throughout the United States. Ministers used parts of his editorials in their sermons. But it is impossible to state the attitude of the majority of white men regarding the plight of the Cherokees.

In 1832 the Cherokees were given great hope by a favorable decision of the Supreme Court. A missionary named Worcester had been arrested by the Georgia Guard for breaking a state law requiring all whites to obtain a license to enter Cherokee territory. William Wirt again was retained to handle the case for the Nation. John Marshall's majority opinion in *Worcester vs. State of Georgia* stated that the Cherokees were a nation and that the laws of Georgia had no force in their territory, and "citizens of Georgia have no right to enter but with the assent of the Cherokees themselves." He declared Georgia's law unconstitutional, and ordered Worcester released from prison.

This decision was cause for great joy among the People. It should have ended their problems with Georgia. The Court's decision was clear. A strange thing happened,



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION NATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARCHIVES, NEG. NO. 991-A

Sequoyah, inventor of the Cherokee written language however. President Jackson did not support the Court. He is even reputed to have said, "John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it." This is the president who forced South Carolina to back down on its States' Rights stand and threatened force to put down secession. This is the president who dramatically said, "Our federal union; it must and shall be preserved." This president—whatever his thinking about Indians—allowed Georgia to successfully defy the Supreme Court. No one knows why he allowed Georgia to ignore the Court, keeping Worcester in prison for a year, illegally executing the unfortunate Cherokee, Cornstalk, and continuing to appropriate more Cherokee lands.

John Ross nevertheless thought he saw a silver lining for his people. It was 1832, another presidential election year, and Andrew Jackson might be defeated by Henry Clay. Clay had spoken out against Jackson's actions regarding the Cherokees. (Ross didn't know that Clay's speeches were mostly political maneuvering—Clay, too, was typically frontier in his attitude about Indians.) So Chief Ross kept working for unity, believing that every day the Cherokees remained on their lands was another day they were closer to winning their great battle.

But the essential unity was not to be. The first haunting apparition of disunity appeared in July 1832. Elisha Chester was sent to the Cherokees to persuade the council to accept a treaty of removal. His offer was turned down flatly by the council, but for the first time some of the council members argued for accepting a treaty. They no longer believed the Nation could win. Three powerful leaders had become treaty advocates. Major Ridge; his son, John Ridge; and Louis Boudinot. Boudinot resigned as editor of *The Phoenix* because he wasn't allowed to give his views in editorials.

John Ross and a delegation were sent to Washington by the council in October. Most of the People remained solidly behind him, but the protreaty group was active—they were furious over Ross's refusal to accept $3.25 million for their lands. Georgia was getting bolder—appropriating more land, even land being farmed. A giant lottery was to be held to distribute Cherokee farms (including houses, livestock, and outbuildings) to Georgia whites.

Apparently about this time the protreaty group made a secret alliance with the Georgia government. Several letters have been found which seem to indicate this. One of them, addressed to a colonel in the Georgia Guard named William Williamson, instructed him not to molest William Hicks (protreaty man) and to give him protection, adding "that Mr. Hicks has uniformly respected the laws and authority of Georgia and treated her officers and citizens with kindness and respect. . . ." It was signed by Governor Wilson Lumpkin. Also, it is interesting to note that the farms and other property of protreaty men were withdrawn from the great lottery. Not one of Ross's opponents lost his land.

In April of 1833 John Ross returned from Washington to find his home and farm taken over by a lottery winner and his family. Quatie and the children were confined in two rooms on the second floor. The outbuildings, corn cribs, orchards, livestock, and planted fields were no longer John Ross's. A cracker had won it all in the lottery. Chief Ross had preached nonviolence right from the beginning of all the trouble. Now he was tested. Whatever his thoughts, and temptations, he peacefully took Quatie (now ill) and the children across the Tennessee line. He built a two-story house of logs there.

Every leader fighting against a treaty lost his home and farm. The Springplace Mission Station run by Moravian missionaries and held sacred by the christianized Cherokees was confiscated by the Georgia Guard. The debauched guard turned it into their headquarters—and into a hotbed of wickedness and vice.

In many parts of the Nation, the People fought down their emotions and their desire to violently resist as crackers appeared on their lands and ordered them out of their own houses and off their own land, and stole their livestock.

Some of the protreaty men tried to negotiate a ridiculously unfair treaty. The man most involved in pressing for a treaty was John Walker, Jr.; he was murdered for introducing disunity into the Nation.

John Ross tried to bring about a meeting of minds with the protreaty leaders in September 1834. He wrote to John Ridge urging a meeting: "It is sincerely hoped that every honorable and patriotic man . . . [will] unite in exerting an influence among the People with the view of cultivating harmony among one another. . . ." A meeting was held—but served only to widen the breach. The two groups could agree on nothing.

Ross then left for Washington again to try for support from government officials. Protreaty leaders went too and tried to put Cherokee lands up for sale to the government—for $3.25 million. Ross, as official spokesman for the Nation, blocked the move by insisting on $20 million. The government wouldn't go that high.

In March of 1835 a United States commissioner, the Reverend John Schermerhorn, was dispatched to New Echota to secure a treaty with the Cherokees before the presidential election of 1836. He managed to get a treaty—signed by the two Ridges, Boudinot, and several others. Ross's group wanted to murder the signers—as provided by Cherokee law—but Ross dissuaded them. Nine-tenths of the people stood behind John Ross and voted to give him the power to adjust "the Nation's difficulties in whatever way he might think beneficial." The protreaty men knew they'd have to get him out of the way before they'd be able to hold a successful election for ratification of the treaty. But Ross called for a general meeting and a vote in October. Schermerhorn proposed a treaty which would provide $3.25 million to be paid for Cherokee lands, and 13 million acres of land in the West to be given to them. The People rejected the offer almost unanimously. Schermerhorn offered $5 million. It was likewise rejected. The protreaty men voted with the rest to reject Schermerhorn's offers—probably fearing assassination and also already having plans for another vote in December when they would get Ross out of the way.

John Howard Payne, the famous journalist and composer, had arrived in the Nation to chronicle the events

The CHEROKEE NATION — 1835

STATE LINES
CHEROKEE BOUNDARIES
(Exclusive of Rivers)
CHEROKEE CAPITOL
GOLD MINES
TENNESSEE
NORTH CAROLINA
ALABAMA
GEORGIA
LITTLE TENNESSEE R.
HIWASSEE R.
CANDY'S CREEK
BRAINERD
RED CLAY
OCOEE RIVER
VALLEY RIVER
NOTTELEY RIVER
TENNESSEE RIVER
CHICKAMAUGA CREEK
COOYCHUTTE CREEK
CONASAUGA R.
COOSAWATTEE RIVER
NEW ECHOTA
OOSTANAULAH RIVER
CHATTOOGA RIVER
LITTLE RIVER
BIG WILLS CREEK
COOSA RIVER
ETOWAH RIVER
MOUNTAIN CREEK
DAHLONEGA
CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVER

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for his paper. His articles were sympathetic to the Cherokees. On December 5, 1835, Ross and Payne were arrested at Ross's home by the Georgia Guard. They were thrown into a filthy outbuilding which contained the decomposing body of a Cherokee illegally hanged several weeks before. They were confined for thirteen days—no charges were ever brought against them. After their release Payne wrote a series of articles about the shameful event and the general treatment being forced on the Cherokees. The articles were printed in newspapers all over the country and a loud hue and cry was raised about what was happening.

John Ross left immediately for Washington in a last-ditch effort to see President Jackson and arrange some way of terminating the troubles of his people. Before he left he told the Cherokees not to cooperate with the United States census takers who had entered their territory; the Nation was not part of the United States. When the Cherokees refused to cooperate men and women were stripped and flogged, their cattle were driven off and sold by the guard—and paid for with gold dug from the Cherokee gold fields.

While Ross was in Washington, the protreaty people called for an election—just before the New Year—to ratify the treaty already signed. Ross had left instructions that if such an election were called the People were not to vote, they were to ignore it because the council had not authorized anyone to sign such a treaty. Out of a total Cherokee population of more than fifteen thousand, one hundred appeared on the election day and voted "yes." The treaty was ratified—in the eyes of the United States government—and sent to the Senate for ratification.

John Ross, watching the bitter debate in the Senate, had great cause for hope. The sentiment seemed to be heavily against the treaty and no one expected it to pass. Early in May a vote was called for. Inexplicably, a number of senators who had spoken out against the treaty voted for it. It was ratified by a majority of *one* vote. There had been behind-the-scenes politicking.

On May 23, 1836, President Jackson proclaimed the validity of the treaty for removal of the Cherokees. Provisions stated that within two years all Cherokees must have moved west of the Mississippi—to lands provided for them in what was then called Indian Territory. Later the territory would be part of the state of Oklahoma. The president proclaimed that no Cherokee government represented by John Ross was to be recognized anymore, and that if Ross tried to prevent consummation of the treaty he was to be suppressed.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Such a dereliction of all faith and virtue, such a denial of justice, and such deafness to screams for mercy were never heard in time of peace and in the dealing of a nation with its own allies and wards, since the earth was made."

John Ross refused to accept the treaty as law. He maintained it was fraudulent. He took a petition to Washington, signed by more than fifteen thousand Cherokees and supporters, protesting the fraudulency. He wrote and presented a memorial to Congress proposing a new treaty. He proposed that the Cherokees be allowed to keep their lands that were outside the boundaries of Georgia—some in the northwestern tip of North Carolina and the south-central part of Tennessee. For a while prospects for this treaty were favorable. Martin Van Buren was President now and there was reason to believe that he was softening in regard to enforcing the treaty for removal; but in the end, Van Buren supported the treaty. (Could there have been a letter from Jackson, now at home in The Hermitage?)

John Ross stayed in Washington, trying to find a way to stop the treaty's enforcement, trying to find someone who could help. He found much sympathy for his cause, but no one could provide the help he needed. The year 1838 began, and John Ross did not give up his fight in Washington. Most of his people refused to comply with the fraudulent treaty. The protreaty leaders managed to convince about two thousand people to emigrate, and they left for the West. They left with everything they owned except their land and houses, even driving their fat oxen along. These people had suffered nothing from the depredations of the dissolute Georgia Guard or the Georgia legislature.

While he was in Washington Chief Ross had become well acquainted with General Winfield Scott. Neither of them knew then that Scott was going to be put in command of the forced removal of the remaining Cherokees. But the friendship of the two men was going to be important for the Cherokee people during their emigration.

The United States, early in 1838, began the process of forcing the Cherokees to leave their ancestral lands. General John Ellis Wool was sent to Cherokee territory to enforce the provisions of the treaty. After a short time he wrote a letter requesting to be relieved of his duty:

> *The whole scene since I have been in this country has been nothing but a heartrending one . . . If I could . . . I would remove every Indian tomorrow beyond the reach of the white men, who, like vultures, are watching, ready to pounce upon their prey and strip them of everything they have or expect from the government of the United States . . . ninety nine out of every hundred will go penniless to the West.*

After a meeting with the Cherokee leaders Wool reported that they "maintain that they never made such a treaty. . . . Many have said they will die before they will leave the country."

In May of 1838 Winfield Scott was placed in command of the removal. He had seven thousand troops. He sent a message to the Cherokees trying to persuade them that further resistance was hopeless, and that they should begin emigrating before his troops were brought in and put to their onerous task of moving them by force.

But John Ross was still struggling on in Washington, and the Cherokees refused to leave their homes and lands. Scott sent orders to his troops that there was to be no harshness—it might start war. He ordered his officers and men to show every possible kindness. His officers were to allow no insult or injury to Cherokee men, women, or children. But Winfield Scott could not be everywhere. The rounding up of the Cherokees began in June of 1838. It was carried out with countless acts of bestiality—with rape, robbery and murder. Families were given a few minutes to pack and leave. Corrupt dealers accompanied the troops and "bought" family belongings for a tiny fraction of their worth.

A sick widow with a tiny baby and two other children was ordered to one of the stockades provided for penning up the People until the emigration facilities were readied. She strapped her baby on her back, took the other children by the hand and started. She died as she walked away from her home, her children still clinging to her. At another house a small child had died during the night. The body was being prepared for burial by some neighbor women. The troops arrived, arrested everyone, and drove them out to the stockade. The little body was left on a bearskin couch, still awaiting burial. Feeble, old, deaf Cherokees were prodded and lashed. Some of the older ones didn't understand English and were beaten when they didn't obey the orders they didn't comprehend. Young girls were caught away from their families and multiraped.

The Trail of Tears had begun in sickening earnestness. John Ross finally despaired in Washington and started home. In the meantime his brother Lewis had petitioned Scott to delay the emigration because of the hotter-than-usual summer and the severe drought conditions. Scott agreed. When John Ross returned from Washington he found the People penned up in stockades like cattle. Some were in tents. Some had no shelter. All of them were living in accumulating filth and trash, dying from diseases that always run rampant in such situations. They were despondent and lifeless; they had lost everything. The weaker-willed of the men were seeking escape by drinking the cheap whiskey sold near the stockades.

Chief Ross refused to accept such horrible circumstances—and the prospects were even worse for the long journey ahead. He went to his friend Winfield Scott with his requests. Scott's sympathies lay with the Cherokees and he helped as much as he could. Ross insisted that the whiskey peddlers be driven out, and they were. He asked for soap for his people—Scott obtained it. He asked for coffee and for sugar—Scott acquired them. Then Chief Ross made a request that he knew his friend would find almost impossible to grant: that the Nation be allowed to organize and conduct its own migration. Scott had no authority to grant this request. Undoubtedly he could already hear the cries of anguish and rage from the Indian-haters—editors, congressmen, frontiersmen, and some of his superiors. Nevertheless, he agreed to let the People do it themselves. He had been granted a certain amount of money to carry out the removal, and he permitted Ross and the council to decide how it should be spent.

There was a great amount of organizing to do in a very short time. Private contractors were to supply boats, wagons, rations. Supplies were to be delivered to the emigrants on specified dates at stopping places on the long trek to Oklahoma. Washington ordered Scott to eliminate the unnecessary soap, coffee, and sugar. Scott disobeyed the orders in his efforts to somewhat soften the inhumanity.

Records were made of people's losses—from two-story mansions, to a flock of six ducks—for future adjudication. John Ross carefully boxed all the records and documents of the Nation, including all the correspondence with the government of the United States. Religious meetings were held almost constantly to buoy the spirits of those in the stockades. Finally, the Cherokee leaders had done everything that could be done and it was time to leave the lands they loved. It was October 1838.

Private John Burnett, in Captain Abraham McClellan's Company, wrote years later:

> *One can never forget the sadness and solemnity of that morning. Chief John Ross led in prayer and when the bugle sounded and the wagons started rolling many of the children rose to their feet and waved their little hands good-by to their mountain homes, knowing they were leaving them forever. Many of these helpless people did not have blankets and many of them had been driven from home barefooted. On the morning of November the 17th*

we encountered a terrific sleet and snow storm with freezing temperatures and from that day until we reached the end of the fateful journey on March 26th, 1839, the sufferings of the Cherokees was awful. . . . I have known as many as twenty-two of them to die on one night of pneumonia due to ill treatment, cold, and exposure.

Despite all the efforts and planning of Ross and the other leaders of the People, the journey was indeed a horrible nightmare. Rations were used up before others arrived. Sometimes the wagons were stopped and the horses taken in payment of unjust debts. Many hundreds of Cherokees were buried along the Trail of Tears.

When the journey began John Ross was certain that his beautiful Quatie was not strong enough to withstand the awful rigors of the trip. He had enough money for both of them to go by boat most of the way, and he wrestled with his problem. But apparently Quatie did not even consider the possibility of taking the easy way. She was of the People.

One day in a blinding sleet and snow storm she gave her blanket to a small child ill with pneumonia, and she rode thinly clad all that day. She developed the inevitable pneumonia. She died one bleak night with her head resting on a kind lieutenant's saddle blanket. The child lived. Quatie, one of the many martyred to the white man's greed for gold and land, was buried, uncoffined, in a shallow, unmarked grave along the trail—far from her beloved mountains.

The exact number of Cherokees who perished on the Trail of Tears—or in the stockades—is unknown. An attempt was made to keep accurate records, but it became an impossible task. Often the sick would be left to follow along when they recovered. Some recovered; most didn't. It is estimated, however, that the total number who died between June and March was about four thousand—about one-fourth of the Nation's citizens.

When the horrors of the journey finally ground to a halt in the barren Indian Territory of the Southwest, the rations provided by the government contractor were unfit to eat. John Ross had to use most of the fast-dwindling money supplied by Scott to purchase edible food. Little help was received from the two thousand protreaty Cherokees already established there. There was very little in common anymore between the two groups. Ross attempted to bring the factions together and did manage to get a new constitution—adapted to the new situation—written and adopted.

In June, however, a secret meeting of the council apparently decided that the protreaty leaders had betrayed the People. They'd broken the Cherokee law about signing a removal treaty; the penalty was death. Major Ridge, John Ridge, and Louis Boudinot were killed by unknown assassins.

Chief John Ross remained the elected leader of his people for many years, helping them to achieve success in the seemingly impossible quest for a new, satisfying life on the sterile plains allocated to them by the white man.

That the Cherokees succeeded as a people is plain to all who know the history of the state of Oklahoma. They contributed to the writing and the adopting of the state constitution. They are in the professions, and they are working people on farms and in business. A small group of Cherokees refused to join those who saw the wisdom of assimilating themselves into the white man's society. They still live on a reservation.

Then there was a group of several hundred who escaped into the mountains when Scott's army was trying to round up all the Cherokees for removal. They were never caught, and their descendants eventually were granted land in North Carolina where they founded the town of Cherokee. They have established an excellent Museum of the Cherokee Indian and an authentic replica of an ancient Cherokee village. During the summer months, in a large outdoor mountainside theater, they present each night a dramatic and highly entertaining pageant called *Unto These Hills*. Some of them make, display, and sell beautifully handcrafted creations in woodcarving, weaving, and metalwork. And, like their forefathers, they even provide an "inn" for travelers—a modern motel. (And in ironic historic justification, some of them sell to white tourists "genuine" Indian peacepipes, headdresses, etc.—"made in Japan.")

Whatever the present status and function of today's Cherokees in our society, the past cannot be erased from our country's record. Their ancestors were forced to endure a great suffering tragedy. They were beaten, robbed, driven from their homes and lands, and they were murdered. The story of their removal is a dismal page in the history of a country that has so many brilliant pages in the same book.

John Ross

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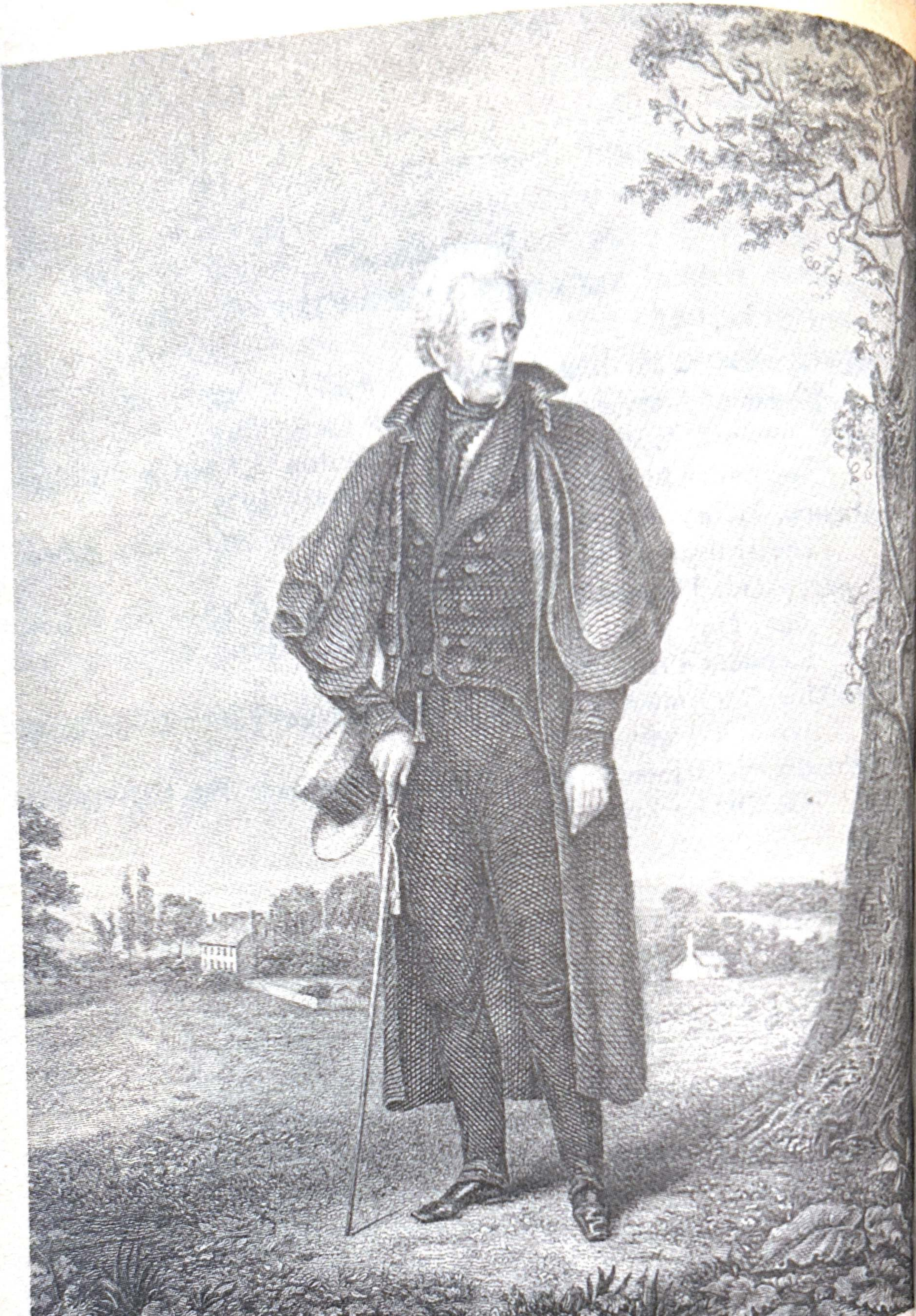


N.Y.P.L.

Andrew Jackson

Chapter 5

ANDREW JACKSON

Frontier Statesman and Indian Foe

GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON,

Sir, Your note of this morning is received, and your request shall be granted. My friend who hands you this will make the necessary arrangements. I am, etc.

Charles Dickinson

Andrew Jackson was fighting another duel. It could be his last. Young Charles Dickinson was famous for his prowess with dueling pistols. He could snap four balls into a target at twenty-four feet—each ball touching another one. He did this without even appearing to take aim.

Knowledge of Dickinson's proficiency did not deter the forty-year-old Jackson, though his friends tried fervently to dissuade him from getting himself killed. (The general was not a good pistol shot.) Jackson was in a great wrath, for two reasons. Dickinson and he had become involved in a complicated matter regarding Dickinson's mode of paying a forfeiture on a horse race wager. Other men added fuel to the fire with exaggerated stories. Dickinson and Jackson had heaped verbal abuse upon each other. Worse, though, was the fact that Dickinson's "polluted lips" had publicly used the "sacred name" (Rachel Jackson) in a slanderous manner referring to Rachel's confused history of matrimony, about which the general was very sensitive.

Jackson had been trying to avoid this duel—not from fear, but because he believed his political enemies were using Dickinson in an attempt to get him out of the way; and because he was convinced that dueling would only put a public spotlight on his long-suffering wife. When Dickinson sent an article to the *Nashville Review* stating that Jackson was "a worthless scoundrel, a poltroon and a coward," the general exploded. He issued the challenge.

The duel was to be fought in Kentucky, with the hope that it would attract less attention than if it were fought in Nashville. On May 30 at dawn, Dickinson, Jackson, their seconds, and General Overton met at Harrison's Mills on the bank of the Red River. Dickinson had his choice of Jackson's matched set of pistols. The distance was twenty-four feet. The men would face each other, pistol in hand, arm hanging vertically. Jackson planned to let Dickinson shoot first since he had no hope of beating him to the first shot, then he would aim carefully (whether wounded or not) and fire deliberately.

General Thomas Overton called, "Gentlemen, are you ready?"

"Ready," answered Dickinson.

"Yes, sir," said Jackson.

"Fere!" shouted Overton with his old-country accent.

Dickinson instantly raised his arm and shot. The seventy-calibre ball struck Jackson in the chest. A whiff of dust rose from his coat. Jackson clutched the wound with his left hand and steadied himself.

Dickinson exclaimed, "My God, have I missed him?" and fell back a step in disbelief. Overton raised his pistol and commanded, "Back to the mark, sir."

Dickinson stepped up to the mark and folded his arms.

Jackson straightened his slender body, raised his pistol, aimed, and squeezed the trigger. The hammer sprang forward but caught at half cock. Jackson pulled back the hammer, aimed again, and squeezed the trigger. Dickinson was hit just below the ribs. He swayed and fell to the ground. He was bleeding profusely and his second tried to stop the flow. His friends obtained medical attention for him, but he died that night.

Jackson's seconds led him to his horse and discovered his left boot was filling with blood. They were much concerned.

"Oh, I believe that he pinked me," is all Jackson said.

The general's life had been saved by the fact that he wore his coats loosely. Dickinson's aim had been true—in relation to where the heart would have been if the coat had fit properly.

The wound was serious enough. The ball had fractured a rib and grazed the breastbone. The doctor decided it would be too dangerous to probe and Jackson carried the ball in his chest the rest of his life. It was a month before he could resume his normal activities.

Word was spread by political enemies that Jackson had committed murder. When the hammer caught at half cock, they insisted, the duel was over. To cock it again and pull the trigger the second time was no less than cold-blooded murder. Even some Jackson supporters agreed that the general should not have done it. But Andrew Jackson said, "I should have hit him if he had shot me through the brain," so great was his desire to still the "polluted lips."

The Jackson political star had been steadily ascending, but the Dickinson duel put it on the wane. People had been talking of big things for his future. He'd already been public prosecutor for the Western District of North Carolina; attorney general of Mero District Southwest Territory; judge advocate, Davidson County militia; delegate to the Tennessee Constitutional Convention; first Tennessee delegate to the United States House of Representatives; United States Senator; judge of Tennessee Superior Court; and major general, Tennessee militia. Now it appeared he would spend the rest of his life administering the business of his plantation, breeding and racing horses, and caring for his beloved Rachel. Rachel would have asked for nothing more. She hated the long separations caused by political life, and she hated the dirtiness of politics.

The War of 1812 would project the Jackson star onto the national scene again, but Andrew Jackson probably had no concern about a future in politics. He had to concentrate on two vital matters. His mercantile business, a constant worry, and his plantation, a pleasure and a profit. His highly successful land transactions and his excellent management of all the details related to his beautiful plantation, The Hermitage, had made him a wealthy man at the age of thirty-nine years. He had come a long way from the homeless orphan he had been at fourteen.

Andy's father and mother had been among the thousands of brave ones who left the security of civilization to seek opportunity in America. In 1765, Andrew and Elizabeth Jackson left Ireland and, after a two-month journey across the Atlantic, traveled five hundred hard miles overland to Waxhaw, North Carolina. Elizabeth had a two-year-old son in hand and a five-month-old son at her breast. The Jacksons were Scottish-Irish, sometimes thought of as a breed apart. Many of this group made great frontiersmen, politicians, and soldiers. They were flinty, quarrelsome, headstrong, and persevering.

Andrew Jackson, senior, took up two hundred acres of land and began clearing and planting it. The young couple attended the Presbyterian church. Elizabeth was carrying a third child when Andrew strained himself lifting a log. He was put to bed in great pain and died. A month later the third son was born and Elizabeth named him Andrew.

Elizabeth and her three sons went to live nearby with her older sister who was a near invalid and needed help. While Andy was growing up and attending school, trouble was brewing between the colonies and the crown. In 1776 the arrival of newspapers from Philadelphia brought people from miles around to hear them read, and nine-year-old Andy was often chosen to read them aloud. He "could read a paper clear through without getting hoarse," and he didn't have to stop "to spell out the word." In August young Andy read some momentous words to forty neighbors: "In Congress, July 4, 1776. The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America. When, in the course of human events . . ."

The Carolinas did have three years of peace after repelling a British attempt to land at Charlestown. Andy grew tall and lean. He was agile, freckle-faced, nearly red-headed, fiery tempered, and profane (when beyond the hearing of his mother, who wanted him to be a minister). According to contemporaries he was nearly unbeatable in horsemanship, footracing, and jumping. But he was too light for wrestling. "I could throw him three times out of four, but he never would stay throwed," said a boyhood friend.

Elizabeth Jackson sent Andy off to Cummins' "classical" boarding school, where he didn't profit much from his exposure to the classics, but did become an expert at breeding and fighting cocks.

The war now came to the Carolinas. Unable to destroy Washington's army in the North, the British decided to wage the war in the South, believing the Tories there would rise up to help. Waxhaw sent men to repel the invaders. Andy's sixteen-year-old brother Hugh, who had gone to help, soon died of "the excessive heat . . . and fatigue of the day."

The classical school was disbanded and Andy began to spend his time helping at the military encampment nearby. On May 29, 1780, the neighbor men were badly defeated in a battle with the infamous Colonel Banastre Tarleton. Elizabeth Jackson and her two sons ministered to the wounded who had been brought into Waxhaw Church. The British and the Tories soon had control of the area and they offered security to all who would beg for the king's mercy. Mrs. Jackson and her two sons refused to beg and left for the protection of Colonel Sumter's forces. The British soon withdrew, and the Jacksons returned home. Andy and his brother Robert "joined up." Andy was thirteen years old and was made "a mounted orderly . . . for which I was well fitted, being a good rider and knowing all the roads."

There were several disastrous defeats for the rebels and the British came back to Waxhaw. Then John Sevier and his men from the mountains annihilated the Redcoats at King's Mountain. General Nathaniel Greene beat them at Cowpens and Guilford Courthouse, and Lord Cornwallis decided to retire toward Yorktown. But there were still Tories and British dragoons in the Waxhaw area. Andy was in several small engagements. On April 9, 1781, a company of dragoons surprised forty militia gathering in the church. Eleven were captured and the church was burned. The fourteen-year-old Andy escaped on horseback. The next morning he and his brother cautiously made their way to a neighbor's house to tell the people their son had been captured. A file of dragoons surprised the boys and wrecked the interior of the house. The officer in command ordered Andy to clean his boots. Andy refused and demanded treatment that should be accorded a prisoner of war. (One version of this is that Andy spat on the boots.) The officer was angered and swung a violent blow with his sword at Andy's head. Andy threw up his arm. The sword cut to the bone of his forearm and put a gash in his forehead. For the rest of his life Andy Jackson carried the scars, and a great hate for everything English.

The boys were held in Camden prison where their rations consisted of one piece of stale bread per day. Andy's wounds were not dressed, and a Tory stole his coat and shoes. Smallpox broke out among the prisoners. Mrs. Jackson found out where her sons were and traveled the forty miles to plead for her young sons' release in a prisoner of war exchange. Her request was granted, but Robert and Andy had smallpox. Most of the forty miles back to Waxhaw were made in a drenching rain. Robert, who was more ill, rode one of the two horses, while Andy walked—coatless, bareheaded, and barefooted.

When the little group arrived at Waxhaw, Robert was in a raving fever. He died two days later from smallpox and from infection of a saber wound inflicted by the same imperious officer who had ordered the boot cleaning. Andy was in delirium, but somehow Mrs. Jackson won the fight to save her last son. Then she set out for Charles Town to nurse two Crawford nephews who had contracted ship fever on a prison ship in the harbor.

In later years Andrew Jackson remembered that his mother, "wiping her eyes with her apron," gave him some "mother's advice" when she left for Charles Town. It included: "Andy . . . never tell a lie, nor take what is not your own, nor sue . . . for slander. . . . Settle them cases yourself."

In November Elizabeth Hutchinson Jackson succumbed to the plague herself and was buried in an unmarked grave on Charles Town Neck. Andy received the news with a small bundle of his mother's spare clothing. "I felt utterly alone and tried to recall her last words to me." Many years later he tried unsuccessfully to find her grave.

That was the heritage of Andrew Jackson. It cannot be ignored when considering the man or the president. War had marked him tragically, taking everyone dear to him. But his mother and his frontier life had prepared him admirably for getting on in his world.

In 1783, Andy's Scottish grandfather died, leaving him three or four hundred pounds sterling, enough to give him a fine start in adult life, but the sixteen-year-old boy soon lost it all in luckless gambling in Charles Town. He went back to Waxhaw for a short time, where he taught school and ardently courted the ladies. He decided to escape the reproaches of relatives and friends about having thrown away his inheritance, and went to Salisbury, where he read law when he wasn't acquiring the reputation of being "the most roaring, rollicking, game-cocking, horse-racing, card-playing, mischievous fellow, that ever lived in Salisbury."

After changing law mentors, studying for six months with Colonel John Stokes—one of North Carolina's most brilliant legal figures—Andy was licensed to practice law on September 26, 1787. In December he and a friend, John McNairy, rode west to seek their fortunes. McNairy had been appointed the judge of the newly created Western District Superior Court, and he appointed twenty-one-year-old Andrew Jackson to be his prosecuting attorney. The Western District was pretty much what is now the state of Tennessee. Andy knew there was talk of independent statehood for the area and it looked like the land of the future—five hundred miles away, two hundred miles of it through Cherokee country.

It was a perilous trip. One night Jackson frightened off a Cherokee war party. Another night he shot one horse-killing panther and tomahawked another. But on October 26, 1788, Jackson and McNairy looked down from a bluff of the Cumberland River on their goal, Nashville. It was a small settlement with a fence around it to keep out the browsing buffalo. There were two taverns, two stores, one distillery, and a dilapidated eighteen-foot-square courthouse. There were a few cabins and some bark tents. Andy Jackson, the terror of Salisbury, the rowdy cock-fighter, ladies' man, and gambler had arrived to embody the law and to enforce it. He did both.

The people were as rough and tough as the country. They were looking for justice, not legal niceties. The debtors in Nashville had taken over and the courthouse was virtually unused. In the first thirty days Jackson issued seventy writs against debtors. The property owners were impressed and immediately gave him their private business. He often had to fight his way into and out of the courthouse. He was not an ordinary young man of twenty-one years. He'd lived through and been toughened by war and poverty. Threats didn't impress him. For seven years he enforced the law in the Western District. Half of his time was spent traveling alone on horseback, endangered by storms, floods, and Indians; but he prospered.

In those seven years he also had a large civil practice and was often paid in land. He held on to much of the land and it rapidly rose in value, laying the foundation of what was to be his fortune. He was a highly successful lawyer, even though his critics have always maintained that he knew very little law. The charge is quite possibly true, but he usually won his cases, and that is what clients want. He was highly skilled at convincing juries that no matter the legal technicalities, his cause was that of justice. Frontier juries cared little for legal technicalities, they were for justice; so was Jackson. He threw himself passionately into his cases. He believed in his clients and their causes and was absolutely in earnest. He knew only one way to go and that was to go as hard as he could when he thought he was right. Those who thought he was right loved him. Those who opposed him hated him. And that's the way it was to be with Andrew Jackson for the rest of his life.

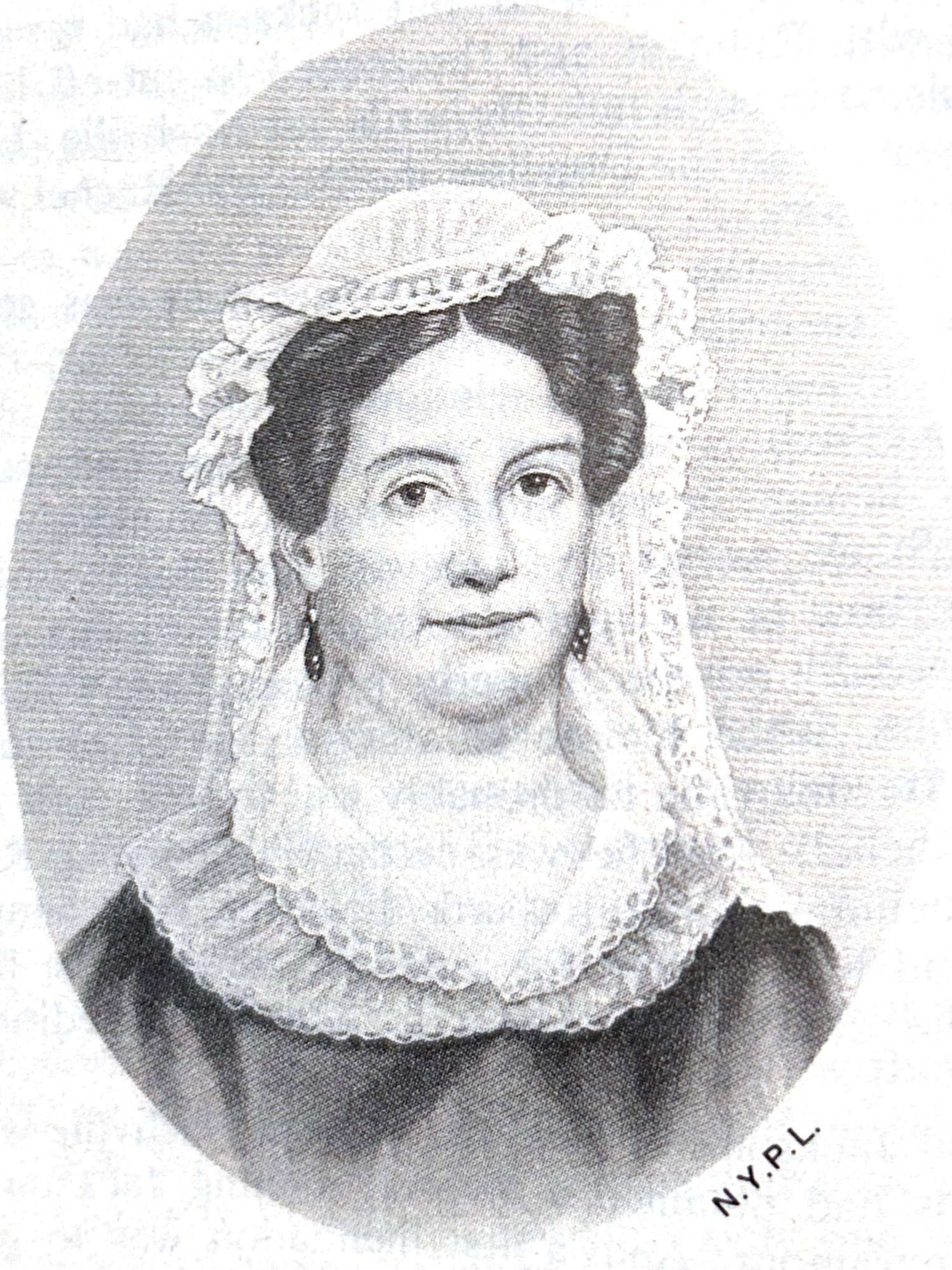
Once Jackson's lack of legal knowledge led to a most serious mistake, the results of which would plague him for the rest of his life. When he was in Nashville he boarded with the widow Donelson, who had numerous children. One of them was a beautiful, vivacious, dark-eyed, buxom daughter named Rachel. Rachel was married to Louis Robards, an apparently unstable man who was extremely jealous of his wife. The young couple had been living in Kentucky until Louis accused Rachel of being too friendly with an obscure "Mr. Short." Rachel had come back to Nashville. Robards had effected a reconciliation and the two were living with the widow. Robards again suspected Rachel, and this time accused her of friendliness with Andy Jackson. It is reported that Jackson had some conversation with Robards and threatened to cut off his ears if he persisted in such talk. Robards left Nashville, Jackson moved away from the Donelson house, and Rachel went to live with a sister.

In a few months Robards announced he was going to come back to collect his wife. Rachel, however, decided she'd had enough of that relationship and made plans to escape to Natchez. The trip would be two thousand miles by water through hostile Indian country. An elderly trader, Colonel Stark, would take her with him. Jackson decided that somehow he was partly to blame for all this and that Rachel would not be properly protected with Stark. So when Stark asked him to go along as an extra guard he agreed. By this time he probably *was* in love with the exciting Rachel. And he was certainly supplying Robards with a definite charge. Robards, however, had changed his mind and had applied for a divorce, though the folks in Nashville didn't know about it until the expedition had left.

When Jackson returned, the word in Nashville was that Robards had obtained a divorce, naming Jackson as his wife's paramour. Andy's first inclination was to go after Robards with his pistol and make him retract the allegation. He decided, instead, to go back to Natchez and ask Rachel to marry him. After some wooing had soothed Rachel's humiliation about being a divorced woman, the two were married at the home of a friend in August 1791.

In October the Jacksons returned to Nashville. Andy bought a plantation on the beautiful, slow-moving Cumberland. It was called Poplar Grove and it was a wonderful place to live for the two twenty-four-year-olds who had already endured so much in their young lives.

On September 27, 1793, came a formal report from the court that Louis Robards had *just* been granted a divorce because "Rachel Robards . . . hath, and doth, still live in


N.Y.P.L.

Rachel Jackson

adultery with another man." Andy Jackson's disregard for legal technicalities had put him and Rachel in a grievous situation. He should have investigated the 1791 report of the divorce, but hadn't. Now his beloved Rachel was legally an adulteress and bigamist. Andy would defend her with his pistols, but the scandal would eventually bring about her death.

When the shocking news first broke, Jackson maintained the marriage was proper before God and in "the understanding of every person in the country." His friends used all their persuasive powers to convince him to have a second marriage performed and Rachel used all her wiles, so that Jackson finally agreed and the ceremony was performed in January. Twice Jackson and his pistols defended Rachel's honor. The second time Charles Dickinson, with the "polluted lips," died for his slurs and that quieted all spoken aspersions until the presidential campaign of 1828.

Rachel Jackson hoped for obscurity, seeming to realize that fame very likely would place the irregularity of her marriage in a limelight. Although obscurity would be denied anyone married to Andrew Jackson, Rachel was to live in the warm aura of one of the world's great love stories. Andrew Jackson was a completely devoted husband who adored his wife. He wrote to her constantly when he was away from her. He was not a poet, but this excerpt from a typical letter indicates the depth of his feelings.

My Love:

. . . What real pleasure it would afford me . . . to return to your arms, dispel those clouds that hover around you and retire to some peaceful grove to spend our days in solitude and domestic quiet. . . .

On another occasion, when Rachel was worried about his safety and felt that he had not written often enough he reminded her that he had written "to you every post since I left you."

"Man never loved woman more than Andrew Jackson loved his wife, before and after death took her from him," stated one observer. During the presidential campaign of 1828, the dirtiest this country would ever see, the old charges of adultery and bigamy were again thrown at Rachel by the Federalist newspapers. The whole country read about them—talked about them. This time Andy could do nothing. A presidential candidate could not challenge Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams, or the Federalist editors to duels. Rachel became ill, seemed to lose all desire to live, and died in his arms a month after the election victory. Sitting at her bier, the president-elect said, "What are the world and its honors to me since she is taken from me." About his neck hung a miniature of Rachel painted on ivory by Anna C. Peale. He wore it always, except when he removed it to sit and contemplate it.

Andrew Jackson was not an ordinary man, but none of our great men has been more thoroughly a product of his time and his place. He reacted to stimuli as did many other frontiersmen, which makes it quite impossible for most Americans today to understand or to accept his actions. How can one condone the actions of a man who fought three formal duels for the cause of honor; who engaged in several brawls for the same reason—rushing into action with a pistol in one hand and a horsewhip in the other. How can one understand a man leaving the presidency voicing only two regrets: that he hadn't shot his rival Henry Clay or hanged his vice-president John Calhoun? Violence was a way of life for those on the frontier. Gentle people were likely to succumb to the rigors of the elements or to the violent actions of Indians or other white men.

How does one explain Jackson's murderous role in bringing about the tragic Trail of Tears of the Cherokees and the removal of other eastern Indians?

The only explanation that helps us understand his cruelty is to look at Jackson in the context of his times. Most of his life he had fought Indians (very often Cherokees), both in formal military actions and in small desperate skirmishes. He had friends and relatives who had been tortured, scalped, and killed. His wife's father had been ambushed and murdered. In 1789 a local Nashville newspaper printed this account dealing with the Creek Indians:

> On the 20th of January the Indians killed Capt. Hunter and dangerously wounded Hugh F. Bell. A party of white men collected and pursued the Indians . . . [who] killed Maj. Kirkpatrick and wounded J. Foster and William Brown. . . . At Dunham's Station the Indians killed . . . Mills. . . . In May they killed Dunham, and in the summer Joseph Norrington and another Dunham, . . . [they] killed a number of persons whose names are not remembered. Near . . . Red River the Indians fell upon two moving families . . . and killed their wives and children. Killed Evan Shelby and Abednego Lewellen . . . scalped John Blackburn . . . and left a spear sticking in his body.

It was the same story around Nashville throughout the decade of the nineties. In 1798, about once every ten days a white person was killed by Indians—within a few miles of town. Alexander Neely, John Glen, three people at Brown's Station, John Everett and his three children, and a young woman named Morris were all killed in a short span of time. People carried rifles whenever they left the house, even to get water at the spring or nearby well. And these white people believed that the land was meant to be theirs, to be taken, to be tamed, to be made to bloom and produce.

Jackson had the frontiersman's attitude that Indians stood in the way of progress, that they impeded the white man's consuming ambition to build a country, to make a better place for his children, to get rich, to carry out the destiny he thought God had manifested to him. By today's standards Andrew Jackson was wrong. By the standards of most Easterners of his own era he was wrong. None of us can say, however, how we would have acted or what we'd have thought had we been in the frontier environment and circumstances.

Andrew Jackson was not only a man of action and a man of his time. He was a man with ambition, and with the courage to pursue that ambition. No one on the frontier had more humble beginnings than the orphan from Waxhaw. For all his rollicking mischievous ways as a youth he had still applied himself even then to his ambition. Few young frontiersmen read law. Andy did, feeling it would make him somebody special—somebody with a place of leadership in the community. When he arrived in Nashville he was already somebody, the prosecuting attorney of the Western District. He made the most of that position and in a few years was elected judge advocate (commanding officer) of the Davidson County militia. He performed well there and when the Western District of North Carolina petitioned for independent statehood, he was one of two elected representatives to the convention that drew up the constitution for the new state of Tennessee. Then he was elected Tennessee's first representative to the House of Representatives in Washington. After a year one of the state's senators resigned and he was elected to fill that position. He didn't like Washington or law making so he resigned and went back to Nashville. Quickly he was elected a judge of Tennessee's superior court, although he was only thirty-one years old. He held that position for six years and was so fearless and just that when he resigned many felt the judicial system would fall apart. (He had even gone, pistol in hand, to arrest a criminal the sheriff feared.)

During this period Andrew Jackson was also building up his personal fortune, with the help of Rachel, who very splendidly managed the plantation when he was away. He bought and sold thousands of acres of land and his income soared. The Jacksons moved to a fine plantation called Hunters Hill. Then came a nationwide financial panic, and one of its victims was a great Philadelphia merchant, David Allison, whose business failed. Jackson held thousands of dollars of Allison's notes which, because of legal technicalities, placed Jackson into debt to many people. He sold his partnership in a mercantile business and his 33,000 acres of land—in a few years worth $200,000—and paid off his debts. He also bought the land which was to become The Hermitage. He was starting all over, but he had preserved his good name and acquired a monumental distrust of, and hatred for, the moneyed men in the powerful eastern financial capitals.

In 1802, at the age of thirty-five, he was to be a superior court judge for two more years and was elected to be the major general of Tennessee's militia. This was the first step toward national fame. For the next eight years, however, Jackson was to be primarily a plantation owner involved in the raising and selling of cotton, corn, and hogs. He made his plantation pay handsomely. He also earned and enjoyed the reputation of being the best breeder and trainer of race horses in the West. In 1805, when he had virtually no money, he managed to buy the great Virginia thoroughbred stallion, Truxton, for $1500 and somehow managed to borrow several thousand dollars to bet that Truxton would beat the celebrated Greyhound in a match race. He trained Truxton with such skill that he beat the unbeatable Greyhound, thereby making the Jacksons financially solvent again. Truxton continued to bring in money for many years. In 1809 Jackson was advertising that the great Truxton was "standing" that season for a fee of thirty dollars payable "in ginned cotton in January or twenty dollars cash right away."

During these eight years the United States was perilously close to war. Westerners were greatly agitated by Britain's disdainful disregard for our rights on the seas. The Royal Navy stopped our ships, searched them for British deserters and confiscated cargoes alleged to be going to Napoleon. Finally, in 1811, a whole tribe of ardently nationalistic western congressmen took over in Washington. President Madison hoped to keep the peace but he couldn't contain the likes of the fiery young Henry Clay and the fervently patriotic John Calhoun.

On June 21, 1812, Billy Phillips came tearing into Nashville crying, "War with England! War!" He had covered 860 miles over mountains in nine days.

Major General Andrew Jackson, anticipating this action, had already circulated this notice to all Tennesseans:

> Volunteers to Arms!
>
> Citizens! . . . War is on the point of breaking out . . . martial hosts are summoned to the tented fields. . . . A simple invitation is given [for] 50,000 volunteers. . . . We are going to fight for the reestablishment of our national character . . . for the protection of our maritime citizens . . . to vindicate our right to free trade. . . .

The intimation was that Tennessee fighters, nearly alone, were going to carry the war to the British at Niagara and Quebec. There was an invitation to adventure and to witness great spectacles, ". . . grand evolutions of an army of fifty thousand men. To view the stupendous works of nature. . . ." Jackson offered President Madison the services of himself and the militia, promising to be at Quebec in ninety days. His offer was accepted, but orders never arrived to put the Tennesseans in the field. Viewing Jackson's later record for victory after victory, it is quite likely that he could have captured Quebec with a lightning strike; that he could have recaptured Fort Detroit; that he could have conquered Florida. He proposed all these plans, but the powers in Washington ignored him. Finally in December the Tennessee militia received orders to report to General Wilkinson at New Orleans. The orders had been sent to the governor; Jackson was pointedly ignored. He swallowed his pride, saying he'd go as a sergeant if they'd just give him a chance to serve his country. He had already, with his own personal notes, purchased so many rifles for his militia that his notes were accepted as Tennessee currency. The governor put Jackson in command. Andy wrote: "It is a bitter pill to have to serve under . . . Wilkinson . . . but I go in the true spirit of a soldier." He and Wilkinson had a great dislike for each other. Jackson took his dueling pistols.

Jackson never got to New Orleans. Wilkinson didn't want him there and ordered him to stop at Natchez. After weeks of waiting, a short note came from the secretary of war stating that Jackson's men were not needed and his army should be disbanded on the spot. Jackson flew into a just wrath. If he disbanded his troops many would die of starvation. He refused to obey the disbanding orders and at his own expense took his Tennesseans home. During the journey home Jackson was completely involved in the welfare of his men, who were on short rations. He personally saw to everything—never resting, always on his feet, day and night. It was at this time in his life his men began calling him Old Hickory—hickory being the toughest thing they knew. They used the name with great affection.

Jackson bided his time restlessly at The Hermitage, getting involved in a brawling bloody duel with the Benton brothers in which a slug shattered his shoulder and buried itself in his upper arm. During the summer of 1813 Tecumseh had been among the Creeks persuading them to fight the white man's territorial aggressions. On August 29 they took action by attacking Fort Mims and, unlike Tecumseh, *their* chiefs allowed the massacre of four hundred white men, women, and children. When the news reached Nashville Jackson had been in bed two weeks suffering with his injury and from a tremendous loss of blood. The legislature authorized the raising of 3500 militia to whip the Creeks. An emissary went to The Hermitage to express regrets that the major general was not in condition to command the troops. "The devil in hell, he is not!" exclaimed Jackson, suppressing the groans which the slightest movement brought forth.

When the army was ready to set forth two weeks later, Major General Jackson, his arm in a sling, was helped into his saddle which he was too weak to mount unaided. The campaign was a long one. Provisions were sometimes weeks late and the army was virtually without food many times. A large group of soldiers mutinied and started home. Jackson rode to personally block the road where he castigated them with great expletives and threats, but they still planned to go home. Jackson grabbed a soldier's rifle and pointed it at them, resting it on his horse's neck. He swore he'd blow into eternity the first man who took another step. The men believed him and the mutiny ended.

Jackson's plans not only included putting down warring Creeks, he also planned to strike south all the way to Mobile, then move east to Florida to smash the Spanish, who were silently on the side of Britain and constantly stirring up the Creeks. In November he destroyed a Creek "Red Stick" village. (The warring Creeks were called Red Sticks because they carried crimson war clubs.) After the victory Jackson came upon a three-year-old whose parents were dead. The Creek women would not care for him. "Kill him," they said. Jackson mixed some sugar and water and coaxed him to drink. Then, at his own expense the general sent the child to Huntsville to be looked after and raised.

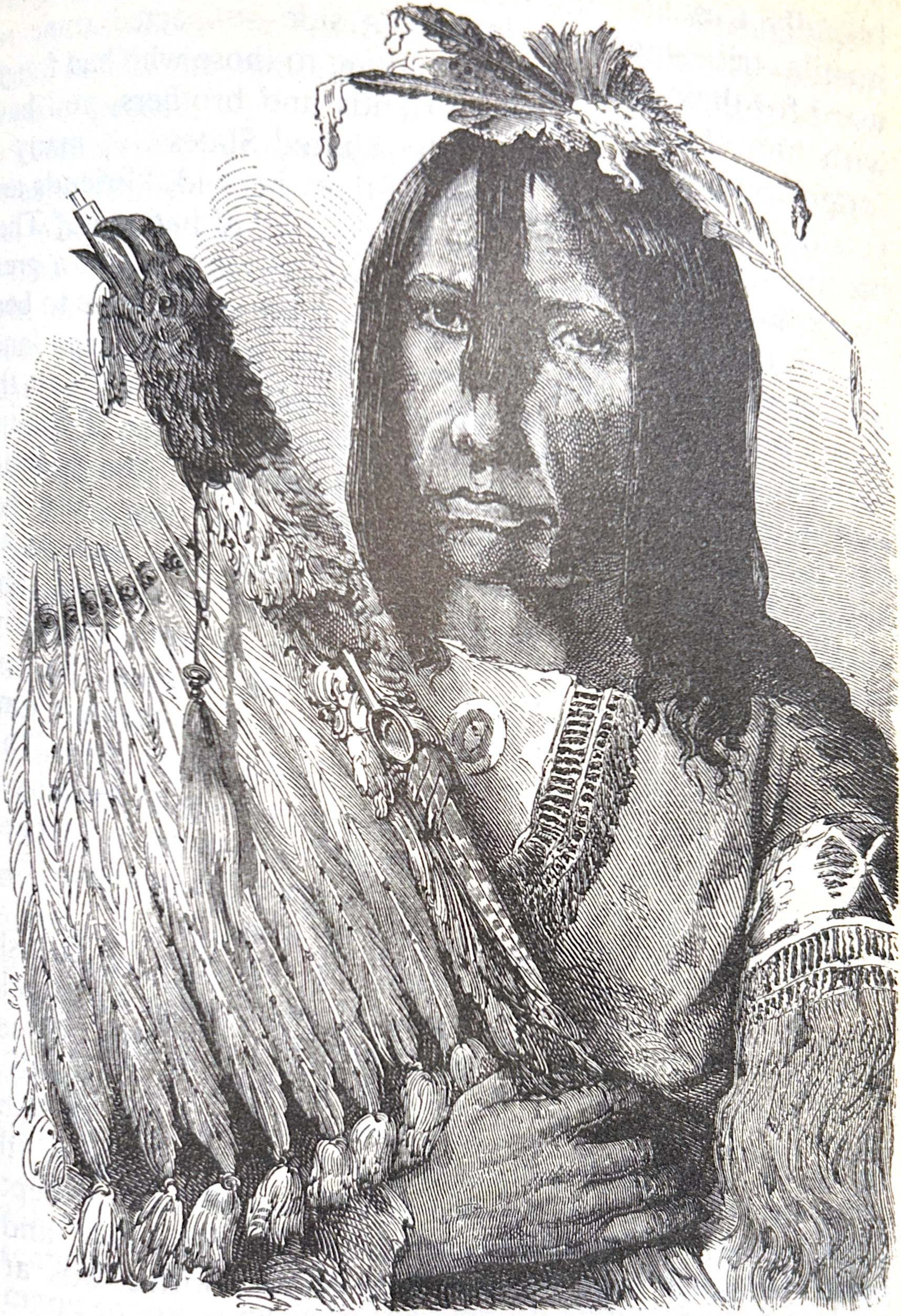
Then Jackson moved to protect a friendly Creek village at Talladega from the Red Sticks. In agony from an acute attack of dysentery, Jackson moved his men twenty-four miles through a roadless forest, sat up all night with his back against a tree questioning his scouts and devising a plan of battle. He virtually wiped out that hostile band, killing three hundred warriors. But the Red Sticks were not through and several indecisive battles were fought. Jackson would not relent in his pressure on the hostiles, however, and won several battles. Finally the Red Sticks, with eight hundred warriors, staked everything on a stand at Horseshoe Bend on the Tallapoosa River.

The general waited on March 27, 1814, while the Red Sticks took their families to safety across the river. Jackson then ordered his infantry to attack. The battle raged most of the day. At dusk the whites found no one left to fight. Five hundred and fifty-seven warriors lay dead and two hundred more had perished in the river.

At Horseshoe Bend Jackson smashed the Creek military threat forever. The campaign had lasted six months and every day Andy suffered great physical agony from sickness and a wound.

Since he and William Henry Harrison were the only generals who seemed to be able to win victories, the men in Washington finally had to commission Jackson as a major general in the regular United States army. His job was to negotiate a treaty with the Creeks and to meet any invasions made by the British.

In June Jackson began his peace council with the Creeks. The Red Sticks expected a harsh treaty, but the



N.Y.P.L.

A Creek Indian chief

friendly Creeks—many of whom had fought against their hostile tribesmen on Jackson's side—expected some reward for their assistance. Speaking to those who had fought with him, Jackson said, "Friends and brothers, you have fought with the armies of the United States . . . many of you by my side." To the Red Sticks he said, "Friends and brothers, you have followed the counsel of bad men." Then he explained that the war had cost his government a great deal of money. The whole Creek nation would have to bear the expense, but the Creeks had no wealth except land. They would have to transfer 23 million acres of it to the United States to pay their debt. (About one-fifth of what is now Georgia and three-fifths of Alabama.) The friendly Creeks were shocked; nearly half of the indemnity belonged to their tribes. They tried to convince Jackson to ameliorate his demands, but he would not be swayed. The cession of the lands would remove the Georgia and Tennessee frontiers from the actions of hostile Indians forever, and it would open up a long-sought access from the Cumberland to the gulf port of Mobile. "Until this is done," he said, "your nation cannot expect happiness, mine security." The Creeks had no choice. They had to accept the terms. Jackson wrote to Rachel: ". . . a disagreeable business. . . . I know your humanity would feel for them."

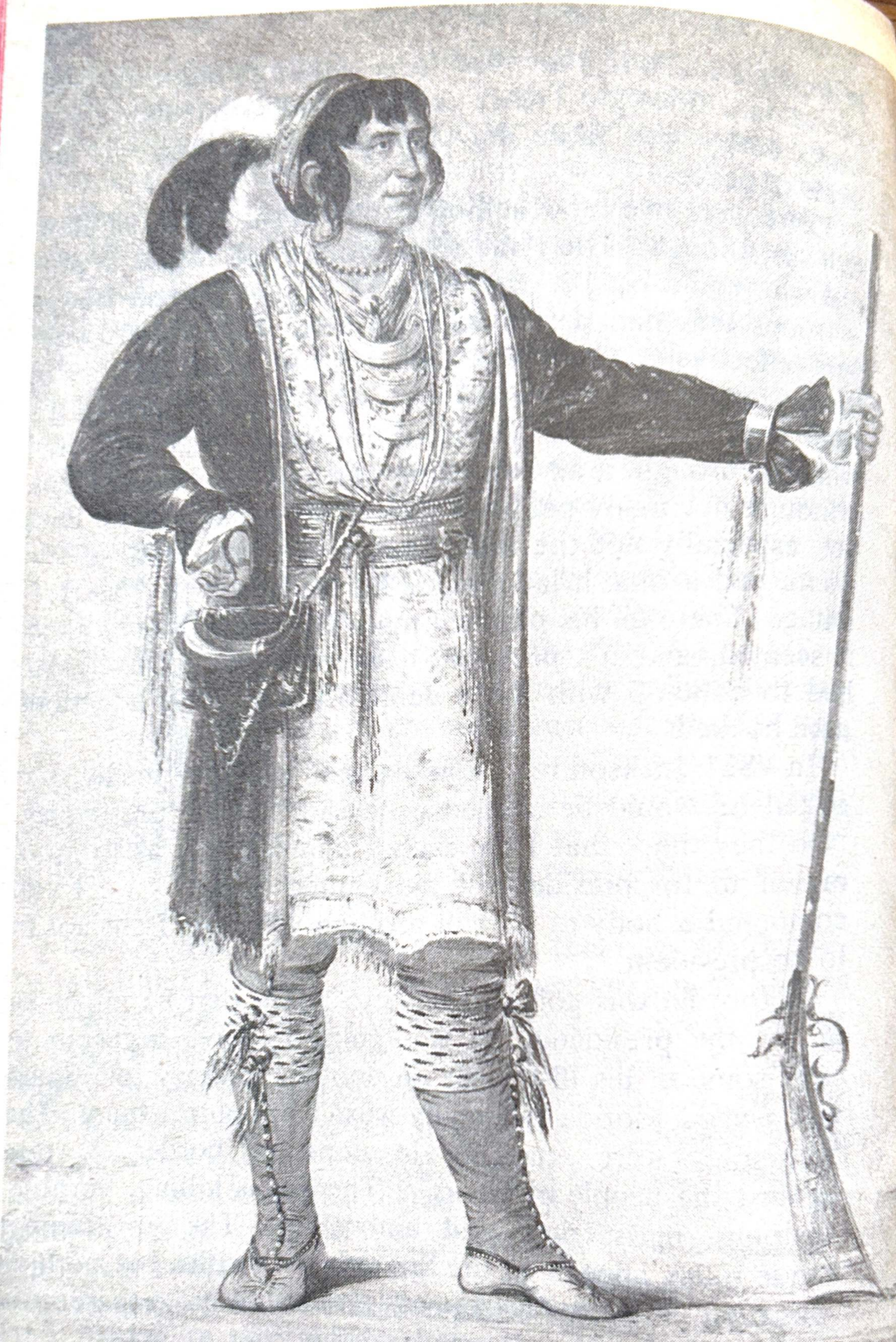
Knowing that he should strike at the root of British strength in the South, he requested permission to attack Florida—still nominally in the possession of Spain. When permission didn't arrive he struck anyway, victoriously. Word came that Napoleon had been defeated. The British could give their full attention now to the United States. In 1814 Americans were defeated nearly everywhere, except in the South. Even Washington was invaded easily and public buildings were burned. Americans' morale was at an all-time nadir.

Jackson got word that the Duke of Wellington's brother-in-law, Sir Edward Pakenham, was moving on New Orleans with ten thousand troops. With whirlwind movements Jackson fought in many places. He moved into New Orleans, instituted martial law, disbanded the obstructing Louisiana state legislature and, on January 8, 1815, soundly drubbed the British invasion force although outnumbered two to one. Since the Treaty of Ghent had been signed two weeks before the battle the victory had no effect on the terms of peace.

There *were* two far-reaching results of the Battle of New Orleans, though: The American people had found a general who could beat a large force of regular British troops—troops that had destroyed Napoleon. Americans *could* fight effectively, *could* beat the British. Humiliations of three years were forgotten. Every American could hold his head high again. The old pride returned. *And*, the man who had brought it all into being was going to be president, although not many people were thinking along those lines yet, especially not the man himself. He was feted everywhere and a month later made his way back to The Hermitage. There all his physical maladies struck him at once, it seemed, and it's probably a wonder that he lived. He had to contend with those debilitating, painful afflictions until he died.

In 1821 Jackson read a newspaper which seriously suggested he would be a good candidate for the presidency. "Do they think that I am such a damned fool as to think myself fit for president of the United States? . . . I can command a body of men in a rough way; but I am not fit to be president."

Before he was going to have to admit that he might be fit for the presidency he was going to have occasion to vent some of his ill-temper on another military foe. Spain still owned Florida but really wasn't in control there. The Seminoles were engaging in constant border warfare against the people of Georgia. There was killing, burning, scalping, massacring, and ambushing. The government made many appeals to the Spanish authorities but nothing was done. Finally, Jackson was ordered to go to the border and establish order. It was his belief that he was to solve the problem in the quickest and most practical manner. Since Jackson had long believed that the Seminoles were being stirred up and protected by British and Spanish authorities, the practical way to solve the problem was to



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AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Osceola, a leader of the Seminoles

invade Florida, defeat the Indians, and destroy the Spanish and British influence.

He whipped the Indians, smashed the Spanish Fort Barrancas with artillery and captured St. Marks. Then he captured an Englishman named Robert C. Ambrister who had led hostile Indians—Jackson had a firing squad shoot him. He apprehended a Scottish trader who had given the Indians warning of Jackson's approach—he hanged him.

These were terrible things to do, but they were very effective. There were no more troubles on the border. Back in Washington, though, many leaders in Monroe's administration thought Jackson had gone too far. The United States was not at war with Spain or Britain. London and Madrid seethed with indignation and hot notes flew back and forth between Washington and those capitals. Anti-Jackson censure proceedings were started in Congress.

When Jackson heard about them, he was furious and rushed to Washington to protect himself. Some senators left town because they believed rumors that he was going to cut off their ears. Secretary of State John Quincy Adams defeated the censure proceedings and seized the offensive against Spain. He offered Spain $5 million for Florida, and the Spanish, fearing the Americans might take it anyway with that wild Jackson, agreed to sell. Andy Jackson's direct forceful action led to our acquisition of Florida—which we had been trying to obtain ever since Jefferson had claimed it was part of the Louisiana Purchase.

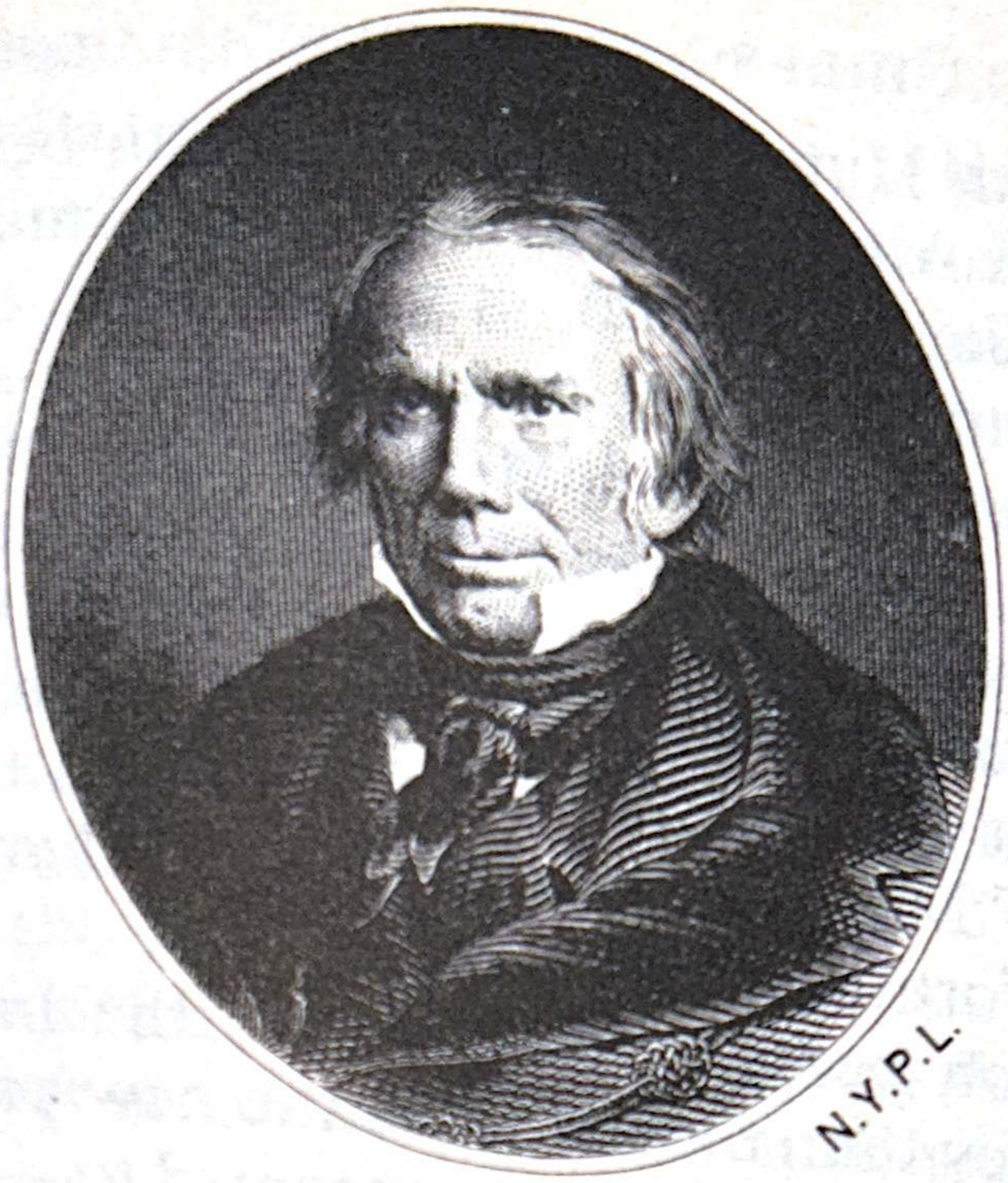
After the acquisition Jackson went on a sightseeing tour of the North. He was met everywhere by enthusiastic crowds who proclaimed him a hero. This led some political experts to begin thinking about exploiting his great popularity. No one was ready to take any direct action in that direction yet, however. President Monroe appointed Jackson governor of Florida Territory, an office Andy didn't want but accepted from a sense of duty. He didn't like the job and in 1821 resigned and returned to The Hermitage, expressing a desire to be there when he died.

Jackson was fifty-four and for the next three years the battle-scarred, sick veteran ran his plantation, entertained a constant succession of friends and admirers, and waited for death at any moment to relieve him from his many physical miseries. At the end of that three years his career was to really begin: he would be a candidate for the presidency.

A group of men had decided that it was time to end the oligarchy in national politics. There had been a select body of statesmen and politicians running the nation since its beginnings. They were men of stature: Virginia planters, Massachusetts men of wealth, men of education and refinement. Though they talked a lot about democracy, a government of the people, they didn't believe in it, really; at least they didn't practice it. They believed in government *for* the people—administered by those who were the most able, themselves.

The new group believed the common man could run the government if he were given a chance. These men convinced Andrew Jackson to be their standard bearer; to be the first man of the people to run for president. Andy said he would not seek the office but would accept it if elected. At this point Major William B. Lewis began his work as the first great national campaign manager. He had served with Jackson in most of his military ventures and he idolized him, devoutly believing that Jackson should be president. Lewis united most of the groups who had become disenchanted with the aristocracy. By election time in November 1824 there were four candidates: Jackson, Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams, and the choice of the oligarchy, William Crawford of Virginia. Jackson won the popular vote easily, but the vote in the electoral college did not produce a majority for anyone. Jackson had 99; Adams 84; Crawford 41; Clay 37.

The Constitution provides that the House of Representatives shall choose a president if no one receives a majority of the electoral votes. Henry Clay was Jackson's rival for the West's vote and he didn't want Jackson to win. He also sincerely believed Adams would be a better president. He used his influence to get his supporters in the House to vote for Adams. Adams won and Jackson accepted the decision in a gentlemanly good-loser manner. He was prob-



Henry Clay

ably even relieved that he could go back to Rachel and The Hermitage.

Adams, however, offered Clay the position of secretary of state, and when Clay accepted, Jackson and his followers believed the two had struck a bargain, a "corrupt bargain": votes to be delivered in return for the cabinet position. This was probably not true; but the Jackson camp believed it was true and "corrupt bargain" became the basis for a four-year campaign, with Andy Jackson so angry that he campaigned furiously. He had reason to believe that he was the man the common people wanted and that the people had been cheated.

In the four-year campaign the Jackson crusaders concentrated all their fire on the alleged dishonesty of the Adams gang. In desperation the Adams forces brought up the old adultery-bigamy charge against Rachel. Jackson could never understand why Adams let it be done, and Andy immediately squelched a similar attack against Mrs. Adams: "I never war against females and it is only the base and cowardly that do." Well, the "base and cowardly" not only dragged Rachel through the slime day after day, but they reached the height of infamy by charging the good Elizabeth Hutchinson Jackson with being a common prostitute and Andy's father with being a mulatto who had sold the first Jackson child into slavery.

Andy's victory in the election was one-sided, but the price paid was much too high, even before Rachel's death six weeks later. He was the most grief-stricken, embittered man ever to enter the presidency. "May God almighty forgive her murderers as I know she forgave them. I never can." When he left The Hermitage to travel to Washington he admitted: "My heart is nearly broke. I try to summon up my usual fortitude but in vain."

The common people, though, were the happiest they'd ever been. They didn't know what the new president's policies were—unfortunately, no one seemed to—but they were sure they would approve of them. Jackson was *their* president. They had elected him despite the efforts of the oligarchy, and now they headed for Washington by the thousands. No one was ready for the mob. Prior to Inauguration Day, 1829, only the elite had attended the functions. After the oath taking, the "Majesty of The People" descended on the White House and their majesty disappeared. They climbed on upholstered chairs with muddy boots, knocked down damask draperies and trampled them, and broke the delicate glassware filled with punch. They pressed so hard to see and touch their hero that he had to be smuggled out and taken back to his rooms at the boardinghouse. The interior of the White House was saved from complete ruin by taking great tubs of punch out into the spacious yard. One gentle lady lamented the absence of "rank, fashion, beauty, talent. . . . Oh! 'tis melancholy." And John Quincy Adams was left to slip out of town unseen and unmissed. Andrew Jackson would not even speak to him.

The government *by* the people got under way quickly. President Jackson removed many public employees who had held their jobs for years. Some were dishonest, lazy, or indifferent, but some were hardworking and faithful. Jackson soon found himself embroiled in a tempest in a teapot that boiled over into a big storm when the wives of his cabinet members snubbed Peggy Eaton, who was the wife of John Eaton, secretary of war. The other wives accused Peggy of loose morals. Jackson rose gallantly to her defense, remembering the slander against Rachel. He ended up with a whole new cabinet—a better one. It's the only time on record that a woman was the cause of an administration breakup.

Old Hickory also found himself in a fight he relished. He had decided the people wanted to destroy Nicholas Biddle's too powerful Bank of the United States. Since he considered himself the direct representative of the people he destroyed the Bank, after a tremendous battle against Henry Clay and the moneyed interests of the east. He believed the Bank was making the rich richer and the poor poorer.

As president, Jackson never lost a fight. When John C. Calhoun led South Carolina in desperate opposition to the abominably high rates of the tariff then in effect, he expected Jackson's help. The South and the West had always fought together against high tariffs, which helped only the manufacturers in the North. Calhoun and some other leaders in South Carolina felt they had utilized every technique to obtain action from Congress, and they had failed. They began talking about a state's right to nullify an act of Congress if they thought the act was unconstitutional or not in the best interest of the state. Some of the South Carolinians even spoke about secession from the Union if all else failed. Daniel Webster from Massachusetts had engaged brilliantly in Senate debate with South Carolina's Robert Hayne on the question of a state's rights. No one, though, knew just where President Jackson stood on the question.

A Jefferson Day memorial dinner was staged by the Democrats and it was arranged to have a series of toasts of such a nature that when the president offered his toast it would have to deal with the question. When it was Jackson's turn to offer a toast there was drama in the air. He arose, fixed Calhoun with a steely glare and said, "Our Federal Union, it must and shall be preserved." Everyone knew then what Andy Jackson thought, and two years later when South Carolina declared the tariff was "null, void, and no law," President Jackson proclaimed: "Nullification . . . means insurrection and war. . . . In forty days I'll have fifty thousand men in the state of South Carolina to enforce the law." He also told a senator if there was one drop of blood shed in opposition to the laws, "I will hang the first man I lay hands on engaged in such conduct upon the first tree I can reach." Another senator remarked, "When Jackson begins to talk about hanging, they can begin to look for the ropes." Jackson was saved from carrying out his threat when Henry Clay worked out a compromise. But the president had proved the power of the federal government. It was not the states' government, it was the people's government.

Although ministers and other intellectuals recognized this idea as invasion and conquest and opposed the plan, Jackson represented the will of the common people. The people's president believed he and the people wanted the same things. He *was* the first man-of-the-people to become president—the first president from the West, too. He knew the settlers on the frontier wanted all the Indians removed to the other side of the Mississippi. He had espoused that idea for a long time, had actually been one of the most important spokesmen for it. He worried the westerners in his inaugural address in March, though, for he said, "It will be my sincere and constant desire to observe toward the Indian tribes within our limits a just and liberal policy, and to give . . . humane and considerable attention to their rights and their wants."

However, in December when Jackson gave his first annual message to Congress, he said the Indians east of the Mississippi were in danger. The same thing could happen to them that happened to the Mohegans, Narragansetts, and other tribes that had just been swallowed up by the white man's westward push. If the Choctaws, Cherokees, Creeks, Chickasaws, and Seminoles wanted to retain their identity and have tribal lands they must move and take up lands set aside for them across the Mississippi. The government would provide plenty of land and the only white men there would be some soldiers to keep other whites from encroaching. Then he said the removal would be voluntary, but, he warned, Indians who did not move would be just like everyone else, subject to the laws of the states in which they lived. There would be no more tribes—just individual Indians, swallowed up "in the mass of our population."

The president had spoken: There would not be coexistence. The white man was destined to have the tribal lands, so he might as well get on with taking them.

To the frontiersmen Jackson was right. Maybe the white man was predestined; maybe those tribal lands could not be set aside for such nonproductive uses as hunting and fishing; maybe they were really needed by the burgeoning, driving, striving, white culture. Possibly Jackson was really more humane than those whites who said beautiful words to the Indian, made wonderful promises that would not be honored.

Whether Jackson was right in his policy and actually more humane in his honesty may long be contended. But there is no defense possible for the way the policy was implemented—for the stark tragedy that took place in the decade of the thirties, as the tribes were forced to migrate. Unscrupulous politicians took profits from the funds set aside for removal. Evil Indian agents tricked the Indians into unfair agreements. Rapacious settlers took possession of Indians' property before they were prepared to move. State officials defrauded the Indians. The Choctaws and Chickasaws suffered as horribly during their migration as did the Cherokees and Creeks on their infamous Trail of Tears. Jackson and the other federal government officials did little to prevent the tragedy, even though they did not intend that it should happen.

Nevertheless, Andrew Jackson gave the people what they wanted, at least what most of them wanted. Not only did he give them Indian lands, but he gave them a strong government, he destroyed the Bank, he defended a "defenseless" woman, he preserved the Union, he gave the common man an opportunity to hold political office. He also gave them excitement, and they had the feeling that he was truly of them. His popularity continued to soar throughout his eight years in office. One historian has said he was the only president who left office even more popular than when he entered. He also left the office a far different position from when he entered it. He had made the presidency a powerful position for any man who wanted to follow his precedents. Presidents before him had taken the term chief executive literally. They had executed the laws Congress had passed. Jackson was no mere executive. He was a dynamic force—leading and driving the Congress to do what *he* believed the common people wanted.

A study of his two terms reveals many mistakes made, too many prejudices acted upon, and too many quarrels fought. Andrew Jackson, however, brought the federal government to the people. The aristocrat who would govern *for* the people had moved out. The government would be *by* the people, for good or ill. Clinton Rossiter, authority on the presidency, wrote: "He was a giant in his influence on our system . . . and second only to Washington in terms of influence on the presidency."

When Andy Jackson left the White House he had picked Martin Van Buren as his successor. He probably could have procured anyone's election, so great was his influence. When he returned to The Hermitage he was seventy years old, and there were serious financial problems that took much of his time. He remained mentally alert and interested in contemporary affairs. He even dictated that the Democrats nominate James K. Polk in 1844. Physically, however, he was suffering terribly from the wounds he had incurred and from the hardships of the campaign against the Creeks.

Yet Old Hickory lived on, until June 8, 1845. An old slave was asked if he thought Jackson had gone to heaven. He replied, "If he wants to be there, I'll bet he is."

Andrew Jackson
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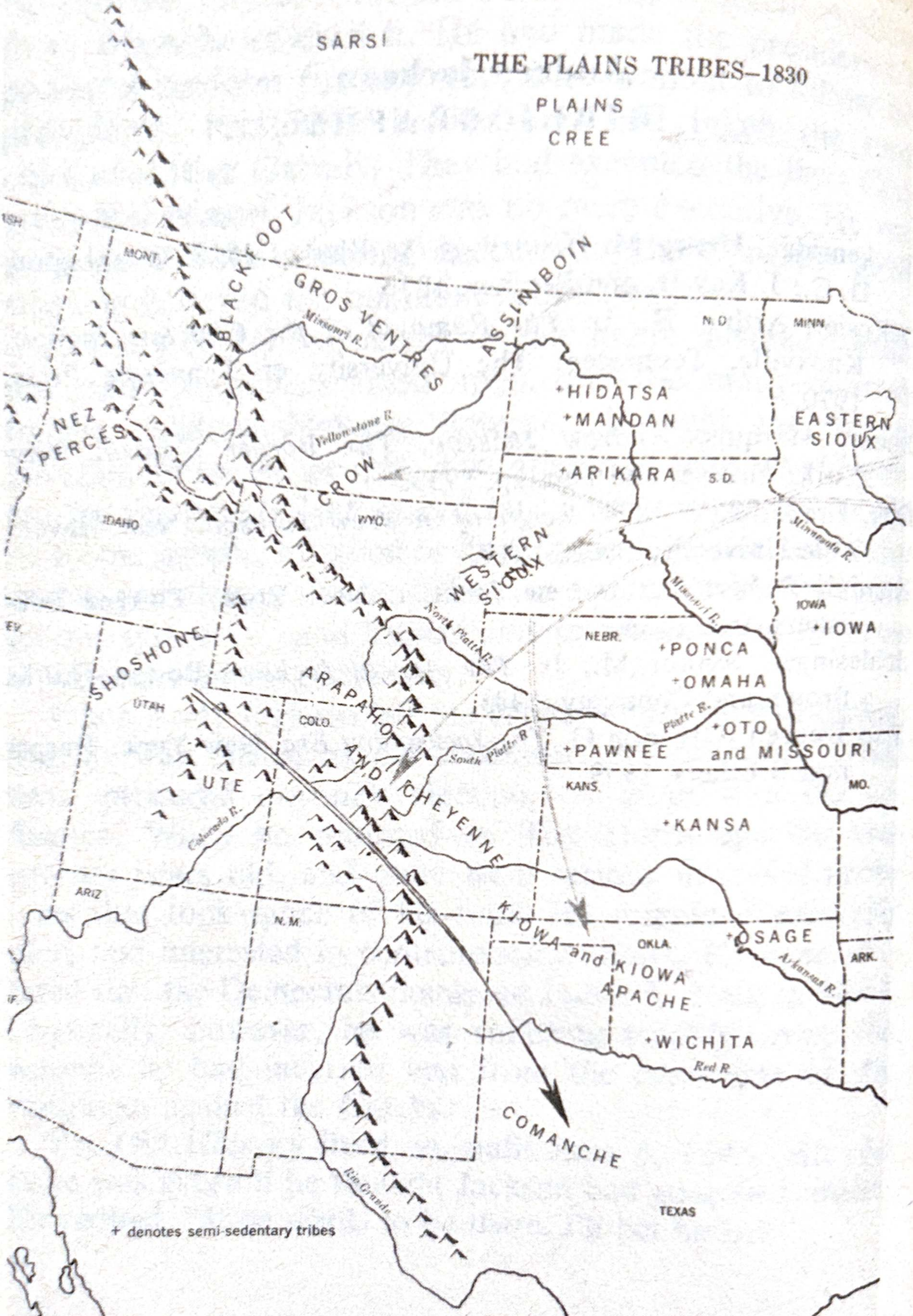
THE PLAINS TRIBES—1830

+ denotes semi-sedentary tribes

SARSI
PLAINS CREE
BLACKFOOT
GROS VENTRES
ASSINIBOIN
MONT.
Missouri R.
NEZ PERCÉS
Yellowstone R.
CROW
IDAHO
WYO.
WESTERN SIOUX
+HIDATSA
+MANDAN
+ARIKARA
N.D.
MINN.
S.D.
EASTERN SIOUX
Minnesota R.
Missouri R.
IOWA
+IOWA
NEBR.
+PONCA
+OMAHA
North Platte R.
Platte R.
+OTO and MISSOURI
+PAWNEE
South Platte R.
SHOSHONE
UTAH
ARAPAHO AND CHEYENNE
COLO.
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Colorado R.
KANS.
+KANSA
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ARIZ
N.M.
KIOWA and KIOWA APACHE
OKLA.
+OSAGE
ARK.
Arkansas R.
+WICHITA
Red R.
COMANCHE
TEXAS
Rio Grande

N.Y.P.L.

Chapter 6

JOHN CHIVINGTON

Sand Creek—Battle or Massacre?

CATTLE GRAZE THERE now in the valley. Once it was buffalo country. Up on the ridge there is a small marker. You can stand there and look down at the pastoral scene. Once Colonel John Chivington was there at dawn, with 750 troops and 4 twelve-pound howitzers. He looked down upon Chief Black Kettle's village of Cheyennes and Arapahos. One hundred and thirty lodges stretched for a mile along the bend of Big Sandy Creek, in Colorado Territory. The events of that day would make the colonel a hero, briefly. Then the hero's mantle would be swept away and replaced with the villain's cloak. One hundred years later the name of Chivington would still be in the school books.

Colonel J. M. Chivington, the textbook writers say, fell upon Black Kettle's friendly Cheyennes without warning. The troops wiped out the village. Men, women, and children were massacred, tortured, scalped, and their bodies mutilated: another horrible episode in the white man's conquering of the American Indian. The books call it the Sand Creek Massacre and state most of the slaughter was of women and children. Some say two-thirds of the dead were defenseless women and children.

Almost every reference to that November 29, 1864, tells the same story. Yet, in later years the people of Colorado were to welcome the colonel among them and honor him by giving a town his name.

Who was John Chivington? He was the son of Isaac and Jane Chivington, who were married in 1810 and settled in Warren County on the Ohio frontier. Isaac bought two sections of land at sixty-four cents an acre. He would make a living by cutting down the virgin hardwood timber, and floating it down the river to be sold at good prices in Cincinnati. He had to help win a war first, though. He joined General William Henry Harrison to fight Colonel Procter's Redcoats and Tecumseh's Indians. He was in the Battle of the Thames, where Tecumseh was killed and the British were routed.

With the British-Indian threat destroyed, Isaac and Jane settled down to raise a family. Six children were born in their log cabin, four of whom lived. John was born January 27, 1821, and he had two brothers and a sister. Life for the Chivingtons was strenuous but pleasant, until Isaac died in 1826. When John was thirteen he went into the woods to cut trees and form the roughly hewn balks for the market down the river.

The Chivington children had very little time in school because there was no regular school in the area, but when an itinerant teacher did set one up, the Chivington children were enrolled. Most of their education, however, was provided by their mother and a few books Isaac had acquired. John read Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the Bible and an Episcopalian prayer book. There was also a dictionary for him to peruse. But most of his time was taken up with felling trees and making balks.

He was very much a perfectionist. His balks were exactly eight feet long and hewn so carefully they appeared to have been planed. He began going to Cincinnati on the rafts and when he was nineteen he met a girl there whom he thought most attractive. She was short and full-figured; she could write in English and French, could teach school, sew a fine seam and milk a cow. Her name was Martha Rollason, and within a few months John proposed. They were married within a year, and John apprenticed himself as a carpenter.

Two years later John attended a series of revival meetings, an experience which influenced the rest of his life. He immediately joined the Methodist Church and soon thereafter decided he wanted to become a minister. From the local minister he borrowed some textbooks on theology, history, science, and economics. He worked as a carpenter in the daytime, studied at night, and properly assumed the role of husband and father. In his twenty-third year he was ordained a minister in the Methodist Church and became a father for the third time.

The young Reverend John Chivington was also assigned to his first church. The Zoar village church was in a crime-ridden area and the congregation was rapidly declining in numbers. Not only was John ardent in fighting crime and criminals; he was also good at it and soon had a reputation as a fighting pastor. He had both the temperament and the physical requirements for it, standing almost six feet five inches tall and weighing 260 pounds—none of it fat. His eyes were black and piercing, and he had coarse reddish-brown hair. Amazingly agile, his strength and endurance seemed limitless, for he loved the physical life and would chop wood just for the joy of using his muscles and retaining his old skill.

Within two years at Zoar the fighting pastor had rebuilt his congregation in numbers and spiritual strength, had greatly reduced the crime rate and was assigned to another troubled congregation. He accomplished the same results in that situation and also obtained better schools and a new library.

Two years later, in 1848, the Methodist hierarchy sent him to his most difficult assignment yet, Quincy, Illinois. There he learned how to get the support of the saloonkeepers and gamblers in cleaning out the worst dens of iniquity and in obtaining a library and better schools. And there he made a commitment to oppose slavery. A runaway slave girl, being trailed by a United States marshall, came to John and told her story. She had been sold by her master to a man who planned to use her as a prostitute in a brothel. The reverend was incensed and placed his huge frame between the marshall and his quarry. His wrath and his muscles discouraged the slave-catcher who left town empty-handed. The Reverend John Chivington was an implacable foe of the "peculiar institution" from that moment.

In two years Chivington had improved the Quincy situation to the point where the Methodists thought they could better use his trouble-shooting talents in another critical situation; they never let him stay anywhere more than two years. This time they sent him to Missouri where he had four posts in the next eight years. He was a circuit-riding minister for two hard years, and then he was sent as a missionary among the Wyandot Indians.

The Wyandot tribe had fought the white man's incursions for many years but had finally given up and were considered "pacified," but only partly "civilized." Many of them still held on to their old tribal customs and religion and many of them were illiterate and ignorant of the English language. Reverend Chivington found this a new kind of challenge. He made friends with the Wyandots and helped them build a log church where he preached in English, with an interpreter. Some whites came into the area and he taught them and the Indians to live together in peace. He helped build a second log church and preached in both. As usual, he had things under control in two years.

As a reward the Methodists decided to give him an assignment in an established town. Martha was especially pleased because the children would be able to attend real schools again. The town was St. Joseph, Missouri, and although it was true that it was an established town, it was also true that it was a wild, wild river town on the big, brown Missouri. There were long rows of saloons and gambling houses. Murders and robberies were so frequent they were hardly news. Travelers going west were fair game for all nefarious characters and were indeed lucky to get out of St. Joe with their money, or sometimes to get out at all.

Reverend Chivington was not frightened. He got his congregation organized, the schools operating properly, and then set out to clean up the riverfront. He was a huge proponent of "muscular Christianity" in a black suit and a white shirt. At the best saloons he persuaded the owners that it was in their best interests to help him. Their saloons and their honest gambling tables suffered, and the town suffered from the wrongdoing of the villainous ones. As in Quincy, he obtained their support and they even helped finance schools, a library, and other community improvements.

In his sermons he stressed the benefits of the good religious life and left the fine points of theology to others. When the Kansas-Nebraska Act was passed—granting the people of those territories the right to choose whether they wanted slavery—he came out for the Free Soilers and preached it from his pulpit and took an active part in helping slaves escape to free territory. Soon, he found that his life was in danger. On several Sunday mornings proslavery mobs gathered to prevent him from preaching, but his reputation for physical prowess and strength and his fighting spirit helped him avoid serious trouble, until the proslavery people organized a society to drive all Free Soilers out of the county. The members decided they would have to silence Chivington. They sent him a notice to stop preaching in the county or they would tar and feather him. He announced that he would preach, as usual, the next Sunday.

The members of the society went to the church with their tar and feathers. Reverend Chivington entered the pulpit carrying his Bible and two revolvers. He opened the Bible to the text he planned to use, placed a revolver on each side of the Bible and announced, "By the grace of God and these two revolvers I am going to preach here today." He preached and became known as the Fighting Parson throughout the territory.

The Methodist patriarchs, however, feared for his safety. They sent him to Omaha, Nebraska, and appointed him the presiding elder of the Omaha District. Two years later, in 1858—when John was thirty-seven—he was sent to Nebraska City. It was a boisterous town and the congregation there had been scared out. Someone had moved a bar into the church and the building had become a saloon. When Reverend Chivington arrived his wrath was mighty. He roared in, ordered everyone to leave, threw out all the saloon paraphernalia and smashed all the beer kegs and whiskey containers in the dusty street.

One citizen demanded to know by what authority he was seizing and destroying another man's property. The reverend thundered, "The authority of almighty God!" And he soon had the congregation back in its church, the schools in good shape, and the "good" saloon keepers "helping him rid the town of iniquity."

In two years the Methodist Church had another assignment for him. It was March of 1860, a presidential election year, and the South was making ominous statements about secession if the wrong kind of man should be elected in November. The eastern half of the country was in turmoil; but the Methodists were concerned about setting up a church way out on the Colorado frontier, in Denver, a little mining settlement named in honor of the famous governor of Kansas Territory. So the Chivingtons moved again, even though Martha believed their sixteen years of hardship and sacrifice really entitled them to a less strenuous situation and a place where the children at least might have some of the benefits of civilization.

The reverend filled a wagon with household belongings and his family, traversed some wild country with some trepidation about unfriendly Indians, but arrived safely in Denver and built a house for his family. Then he built a church with the aid of some of the saloonkeepers and other businessmen. He was the presiding elder for that turbulent Pike's Peak "fifty-niner" area and he held services in numerous towns. In one of them, he wrote, he used a saloon regularly and that it was "a profitable season of worship."

But Reverend John Chivington was soon to be caught up in his destiny. Abraham Lincoln had been elected president and the South believed he was the wrong kind of man to be president of all the states. The states in the deep South seceded from the Union and after the one-sided battle in which Fort Sumter was nearly destroyed most of the other slave-holding states joined the Confederacy.

In February of 1861 the territory of Colorado had been officially recognized, but the joy in Colorado was short-lived. The word was out that the Confederacy wanted the gold and silver in the West. The news was that there would be an invasion of New Mexico and then the Confederate troops would use that territory as a base to capture some of the northern states of Mexico, push on to take California, and then strike north into the gold- and silver-laden mountains of Colorado. John Chivington was a staunch Union man and had used his pulpit to argue the Union cause. He had been criticized for it. Not all Coloradoans were Lincoln supporters and many of them told Chivington they disagreed with him and told him to stop.

President Lincoln had sent orders to Colorado's new governor William Gilpin: he must keep Colorado in the Union. Gilpin quietly began to raise two infantry companies and to buy guns for the new troops. In July, when the South won the first Battle of Bull Run, the tension grew because the southern sympathizers came out in the open. They flew the Confederate flag, bought guns, and prepared to take over the territory.

Reverend Chivington went to Governor Gilpin and offered his services to the cause. The governor offered to make him the chaplain, but the reverend said, "I appreciate your offer. However, I feel compelled to strike a blow in person for the destruction of human slavery and to help in some measure to make this a truly free country." So Gilpin appointed him major of a regiment and the pastor-major began drilling his volunteer troops at the newly-built Camp Weld, just outside of Denver.

There was no action against the enemy, however, until February of 1862. Confederate troops from Texas had marched up the Rio Grande. They had captured Albuquerque and then marched up to Santa Fe and taken the territorial capital. The outnumbered Union forces in New Mexico sent out a call for help, and the Colorado First Regiment of Volunteers eagerly responded. The Coloradoans quickly marched more than three hundred difficult miles. They joined forces with the New Mexicans and found the Texans. Advance guards of the armies fought an inconclusive battle southeast of Santa Fe in Apache Canyon on March 26.

Two days later Colonel John Slough, the Denver lawyer who commanded the combined Colorado-New Mexico forces, decided upon an all-out battle. He sent Chivington and one-third of his troops through the mountains to attack the Confederate rear. Slough had kept eight hundred men with him but soon discovered that he was greatly outnumbered. The fighting in La Glorieta Pass was fierce, and at the end of the day Slough was forced to retreat when it appeared he was about to be encircled. Therefore, Slough was greatly surprised when three Confederate officers appeared carrying a white flag. They asked for a truce because their wagon train of supplies had been destroyed.

Major Chivington had changed the whole war in the West. He had found the Confederate supply train. Sitting his horse atop a mountain, he reconnoitered quickly and charged down the pine-covered precipitous height. The Texans couldn't stop him. He spiked their cannon and burned the eighty-five wagons filled with ammunition, food, clothing, and forage. He killed approximately five hundred horses and mules. The Confederate force had lost everything it had to have to continue the war in the West.

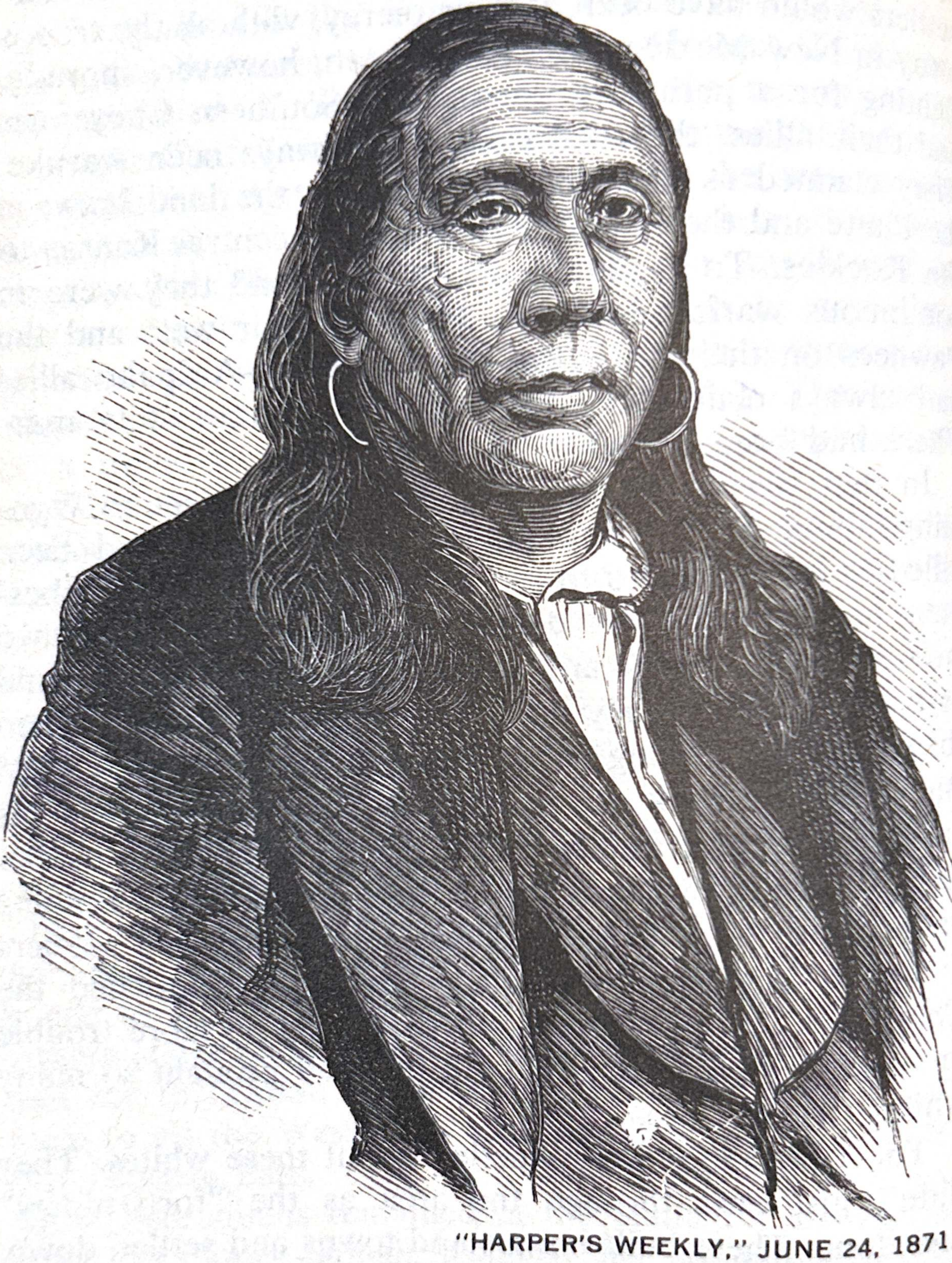
They were granted a truce when Slough found out what had happened. They went back down the Rio Grande to Texas. New Mexico, Colorado, California, the northern states of Mexico and all the gold and silver were saved for the Union cause. Major John Chivington was a hero to all the Westerners who heard about his exploit at La Glorieta Pass.

The Coloradoans remained in the Santa Fe area most of 1862. Colonel Slough resigned his commission and Chivington was promoted to replace him. He was appointed colonel in charge of the newly created military district of Colorado. His new problems would not be about Confederates or their sympathizers; that situation had been corrected. Indians and whites, and their inability to live with each other in peace, would now be his new problems.

There had been no serious trouble in Colorado that year, although that would have been the time for the Indians to launch a war if they had wanted one. The settlers would have been at their mercy, with all the troops away in New Mexico. There had been, however, sporadic fighting for a period of years. The Southern Cheyennes and their allies, the Arapahos, had always been warlike. They claimed as their hunting grounds the land between the Platte and the Arkansas rivers from central Kansas to the Rockies. To maintain use of that land they were in continuous warfare with the Utes on their west and the Pawnees on their east. But the Cheyenne-Arapaho allies had always claimed to be friends with the white man. There had been no hostilities until 1856.

In that year there had been a minor incident in Wyoming about four stolen horses. A Cheyenne had been killed as he attempted to escape arrest. Some of his tribesmen had avenged his death by killing eight men, two women, and a child, and taking two women and a child as captives. Then they made peace for the winter. When they resumed raiding in the spring Colonel Edwin (Old Bull) Sumner took action. Late in July when he and his cavalry met three hundred Cheyennes, he ordered a saber charge. The Cheyennes broke, and a seven-mile running battle took place. Nine Indians were killed, two soldiers died and nine were wounded. Old Bull confiscated the Cheyennes' annuity goods and there was no more trouble until the Pike's Peak gold rush in 1859 brought so many whites into the area.

The Cheyennes were worried about these whites. They didn't just pass through the area as the "forty-niners" had done. These built houses and towns and settled down. Still, the Cheyennes and Arapahos accepted the situation, apparently thinking it was a temporary thing. The Arapaho chief Little Raven went into Denver and was received well there. He did say that he hoped the whites would not do or say anything that would stir up his people and that the whites would not stay *too* long because it *was* Indian land. After Little Raven visited the town many other



"HARPER'S WEEKLY," JUNE 24, 1871

Little Raven, Arapaho chief

Indians appeared on the streets and seemed to be treated equally with the whites.

Unfortunately, this familiarity bred trouble. A group of white men went to the Arapaho village while the Arapaho men were away on a hunt. The whites raped some of the women and stole some mules. Young Chief Left Hand heatedly threatened retaliation. The famous mulatto mountain man Jim Beckwith (or Beckwourth) talked Left Hand out of it, then wrote a letter that was published in the *Rocky Mountain News* of April 18, 1860, calling those whites "drunken devils and bummers." He pointed out that Indians were just as sensitive to wrong as whites, were very proud, and very enthusiastic about retaliation for wrongs.

The equally famous trader William Bent, who understood Indians as well as any white man alive, had been recommending to all who would listen that the Indian must be protected from the white man. Game was disappearing, the Cheyennes and Arapahos were becoming destitute for food. There would be war unless measures were taken.

In Washington, D.C., the commissioner of Indian Affairs, A. B. Greenwood, was thinking along the same lines as Bent. He recommended new treaties be made with the Cheyennes and Arapahos. He left Washington in the late summer of 1860 to give his personal attention to the problem. The subsequent treaty was called the Fort Wise Treaty and it was supposed to define the Indians' right; instead, it took most of the Indians' lands. The chiefs had asked for help in learning to farm. The United States was to provide some livestock and farm implements; to build storehouses and fences; to construct a sawmill, some mechanics' shops, and houses. Each Indian was to be granted forty acres, and the government was to provide technical advice about farming and instruction about how to use equipment. The treaty was signed by Abraham Lincoln in December 1861, and all the provisions were to be carried out in the next five years.

The only provision of the Fort Wise Treaty that was carried out was that which took away most of the Cheyenne-Arapaho hunting lands. It was the same old story. Of course, the government in Washington was very busy with the matter involving Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, and some other Southerners; but that wasn't the whole problem. As usual, the army and the Indian Bureau disagreed on policy. Over the years the army accused the bureau of being too soft, of letting the Indians literally get away with murder. The bureau accused the army of being too tough, of not understanding the Indian and his problems. And the whole thing was made more critical when most of the army was needed back East to fight the Confederates. It meant that the military jobs would be left to partially trained, partially disciplined volunteers.

The stage was set for tragedy. The Cheyennes were becoming more destitute and restive. They continued their time-honored avocation of war against the Utes and Pawnees. In the spring of 1863 they frightened whites as they passed the settlements on their way to raid the Utes. On their return they frightened them even more as they yelled and whooped and waved fresh Ute scalps. In March a small band of Cheyenne braves entered the homes of whites and stole everything they could carry. The military authorities investigated but couldn't find out which Indians were involved.

A band of Arapahos stole several head of cattle from a rancher. A Cheyenne group stole horses and provisions. Stage stations were attacked and provisions taken. Some unscrupulous whites sold rotgut whiskey to Indians. Drunken Indians caused more trouble, and one was shot trying to steal another bottle.

A little to the south the warlike Kiowas and Comanches were raiding along the Santa Fe Trail, and most whites thought an Indian was an Indian: they all looked alike; all tribes were the same.

The situation was quiet in the winter. The Cheyenne ponies were winter-lean and besides, the game of war was no fun in the cold. Winter brought peace in Colorado Territory. The whites who had been in the area for several years said the Cheyennes and Arapahos always made peace in the winter—to get blankets and food. Lieutenant George Hawkins was sent out to look for

Indian wrongdoers of the previous summer. When he returned he filed a report. Part of it said: "The Indians talk very bitterly about the whites—say they have stolen their ponies and abused their women, taken their hunting grounds, and they expected that they would have to fight for their rights."

Winter and peace would leave together. Early in the spring there were two cases of Cheyenne warriors stealing cattle—they were hungry. Troops were sent to find and punish the violators. On April 11, 1864, a report was filed about more cattle stealing and some whites being driven from their ranches. This time, when troops were sent out to punish the guilty, a skirmish ensued and three Indians were killed. No soldiers were killed, though some were wounded. From then on the situation worsened for everyone in eastern Colorado, but especially for Colonel John Chivington.

The colonel was caught between those who thought they understood Indians and wanted to "baby" them, and those who thought they understood Indians and wanted to "punish" them—until they would live docilely. In 1865, William Bent testified to a congressional committee that he had talked with Chivington in the spring of 1864. He had told the colonel that the Chevennes could be persuaded to live in peace, but that Chivington had said he had no authority to negotiate peace, that he was on the warpath. Bent testified he had warned Chivington that he was asking for trouble, that if the Indians ever rose and fought together there weren't nearly enough troops to handle them and the settlers would bear the brunt. Chivington responded that the settlers would have to figure out some way to protect themselves.

The colonel was under the orders of Major General Samuel Ryan Curtis, who believed the Indian agents babied the Indians and just made them difficult to deal with on a realistic basis. John Chivington also held no love in his heart for people who tortured and mutilated their victims, especially when the victims were women and children.

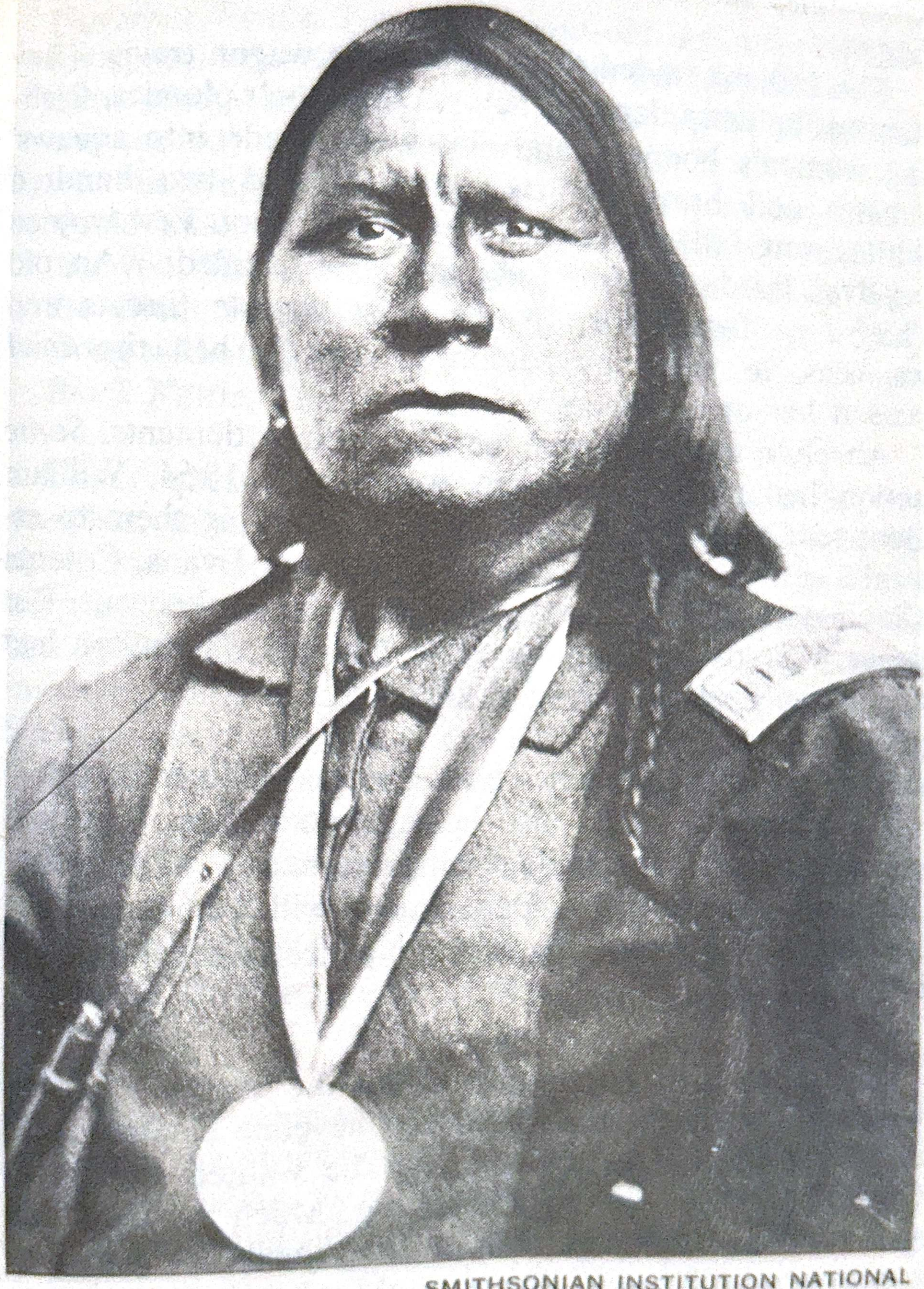
Like most of Denver's citizens, Chivington was appalled when, on June 11, 1864, the mutilated bodies of Nathan Hungate—a rancher—his wife and two children were brought into town and displayed publicly. Not only were the people horrified and outraged but they were in near panic. Commerce on the plains was greatly reduced. Denver and other mining towns ran dangerously short of necessities and prices of commodities skyrocketed. The *Rocky Mountain News* was even printed on pink tissue paper.

Another shocking story was reported in Denver. A small three-wagon train was attacked by Chief Blackfoot's son Jack. Two children were brained and a man was "mutilated in a way shocking to relate." His wife was given to Jack's followers to be passed around for their satisfaction. The next night she managed to hang herself from a lodge-pole. The story may or may not have been true, but the whites in Colorado believed it. They also believed there was a great concerted uprising by all the tribes.

John Evans, governor of Colorado Territory, believed it too. Thinking he could break up what he thought was the solid Indian front, he sent messages late in June to all the tribes, telling them to report to certain forts where they would be provided with food and protected from further conflict with soldiers looking for hostiles. The Southern Cheyennes and the Arapahos were to report to Fort Lyon (the new name for Fort Wise), the Kiowas and Comanches to Fort Larned in western Kansas.

There was misunderstanding. William Bent had warned the troops at Fort Larned to beware of the Kiowas' Satanta, he was treacherous. When he tried to approach the fort he was stopped and not even allowed to come close. Furious, *Satanta* put an arrow in a guard's arm and his Kiowas ran off the fort's whole herd of horses. When some Cheyenne and Arapaho chiefs approached the fort under a white flag to talk, the soldiers fired a cannon at them. To them all Indians looked alike. Chief Left Hand said later they were coming to offer their help in retrieving the fort's horses.

Rage swept through the Cheyenne-Arapaho villages. The whites did not really want peace—they spoke with



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION NATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARCHIVES, NEG. NO. 1380-A

Santana, Kiowa chief

forked tongue. A meeting was held with the Northern Cheyennes and some of the Sioux, and the summer of war began.

The Indians raided the Platte River wagon trains. They danced the scalp dance. They paraded their plunder, flashing women's bonnets, and silk to be made into squaws' dresses and braves' shirts. An estimated two hundred whites were killed. Ranches were burned out. Few women captives lived. A Mrs. Eubanks later testified: "An old chief . . . forced me, by the most terrible threats and menaces, to yield my person to him." Then the chief passed her on to others.

Absolute terror gripped the Colorado settlements. *Some* action had to be taken. On August 29, 1864, William Bent sent a message to the Cheyennes urging them to attend a council at Fort Lyon with Governor Evans, Colonel Chivington, and others. A peace must be worked out. But peace was going to be impossible. Colonel Chivington had a message from General Curtis:

> I shall require the bad Indians delivered up; restoration of stock; also hostages to secure. I want no peace until the Indians suffer more. . . . I fear the Agent of the Indian Department will be ready to make presents too soon. . . . No peace must be made without my direction.

There could be no mistake about the general's orders. When Black Kettle, the foremost Cheyenne chief, arrived for the council late in September he wanted to talk to Governor Evans, not to Chivington. Much of what was said, and who promised what at the council, is a matter of controversy still today. Someone did take down this early dialogue:

> *Black Kettle:* On sight of your circular of June 27, 1864, I took hold of the matter and have now come to talk to you about it. . . . I want you to give all these chiefs of the soldiers here to understand

that . . . we have made peace, that we may not be mistaken by them for enemies . . .
Governor Evans: I am sorry you did not respond to my appeal at once. . . . Hearing last fall that you were dissatisfied, the Great White Father at Washington sent me out to the plains to . . . make it all right. I sent messengers out to tell you I had presents, and would make you a feast, but you sent word to me that you did not want anything to do with me, and to the Great Father at Washington that you could get along without him. . . .
Black Kettle: That is true.

Under questioning Black Kettle said the Kiowas, Comanches, thirteen bands of Sioux, some Northern Arapahos, and a few small bands of his Southern Cheyennes were still on the warpath. He named specific Indians who had stolen horses and been involved in raids. But he insisted there was no alliance between his people and the Sioux to drive the whites out of the area. (Some writers maintain there was an alliance since late spring to try to clean out the whites.)

Governor Evans told Black Kettle that a state of war existed and he could not negotiate a peace. It was up to the military people. Then Colonel Chivington arose and addressed Governor Evans, Black Kettle, and the other chiefs:

> I am not a big war chief, but all the soldiers in this country are at my command. My rule of fighting white men or Indians is to fight them until they lay down their arms and submit to military authority. They are nearer to Major Wynkoop (at Fort Lyon) than to anyone else, and they can go to him when they are ready to do that.

It had to be a complete surrender. After the council Major Wynkoop told the chiefs to bring their people to Fort Lyon for observation and protection until he heard precise directions from department headquarters.

In October Left Hand brought in about forty Arapahos and surrendered some of the loot from the summer's warfare. Black Kettle and his band of approximately five hundred did not appear. General Curtis found out that Major Wynkoop had gone to Black Kettle and worked out an exchange of prisoners and had promised to bring about negotiations for peace. So the general removed Wynkoop from command of Fort Lyon and sent in Major Scott Anthony, who would not be so "soft." By this time Little Raven and about 650 more Arapahos had come to the fort. Anthony told Left Hand they could all stay and he would give them provisions if they surrendered all property stolen that summer and turned in all their arms. The Arapahos turned over about twenty horses and mules, some rusty old muskets, and some worn out bows and arrows.

After ten days Anthony decided it wasn't safe to have so many Indians there and that he couldn't feed that many. So he told them to take back their old muskets and bows and arrows and to leave at once—to go hunt buffalo.

During the time Left Hand and Little Raven were at Fort Lyon, Black Kettle and War Bonnet came from Sand Creek to the fort and told Anthony they wanted peace. The major told them he had no authority to negotiate and that they could not encamp near the post. He said they could stay at Sand Creek—about thirty-five miles to the north. If he received orders to negotiate he would notify them.

Black Kettle believed that Major Anthony hated Indians and would attack if he had enough troops. In a report to General Curtis, Major Anthony did not ask for power to negotiate, but did say that he knew where the Cheyenne and Arapaho encampment was, and that he would attack if he had the troops to do it.

Black Kettle apparently assumed that peace conditions would exist while waiting for the formal negotiations that would work out the details. Left Hand and his eight lodges had joined Black Kettle, so that there were about 130 lodges at Sand Creek—approximately 650 or 700 people.

Colonel John Chivington received a message from General Curtis:

> Pursue everywhere and chastise the Cheyennes and Arapahos; pay no attention to district lines. No presents must be made and no peace concluded without my consent.

The Third Colorado Cavalry had been formed at the end of the war-torn summer to repel what the whites believed was an uprising of the united tribes. The men had enlisted for a hundred days. Their enlistments would be over in early December. They were tired of patrols and camp life. They were jokingly referred to as the "Bloodless Third," and they didn't like the slur. They wanted blood.

Colonel Chivington had to use the Third or they would soon be disbanded. He had General Curtis's orders, and he had a statement from Indian Agent Samuel Colley that he had been unable to do anything with the Indians for the last six months, that "in my opinion they should be punished for their hostile acts."

The colonel decided the time had come to teach Black Kettle and his people that they couldn't continue to play the game of war in summer and peace in winter.

On November 24, 1864, John Chivington marched his troops out of the rendezvous fifty miles southeast of Denver. He had the Third Cavalry, six companies of the First Colorado Cavalry, and four twelve-pound howitzers. He was an inspirational leader—even his enemies granted that. He led his troops southeast along the Arkansas River toward Fort Lyon. The men were inadequately clad, poorly armed, and badly mounted. They had to force their way through deep snow and contend with bitter cold. They crawled into icy bedding about ten o'clock and reveille sounded at four.

Chivington stopped all the traffic on the road so the people at Sand Creek wouldn't hear of his approach. When he arrived at Fort Lyon Major Anthony apparently didn't mention the visit of Black Kettle and War Bonnet, but said he knew where the hostiles were camped, that there were about 1000 of them on Sand Creek, with 2000 more on Smoky Hill—to the north about sixty or seventy miles.

The Coloradoans traveled all night. Chivington wanted to get to Sand Creek by dawn. William Bent's son Robert was forced into guiding them. (He didn't want the job; his mother was Indian and so were many of his friends.) Robert later testified to an investigating committee that Chivington accused him of not taking the quickest route and that the colonel rode up, slapped his revolver, and said, "I haven't had an Indian to eat for a long time. If you fool with me and don't lead me to that camp, I'll have you for breakfast."

When the first light slipped in from the east the troops were on the ridge, with the Cheyenne-Arapaho lodges about one mile away. Chivington said he did not plan to attack without notice, but intended to surround and immobilize the people in the camp. Then he would demand the surrender of those who had been guilty of summer hostilities, demand the return of all stolen property and firearms, and demand hostages to insure against future raids and murders.

Some of the junior officers with Chivington that day had been with Major Wynkoop when he had negotiated with Black Kettle. They insisted that the Cheyenne-Arapaho camp was friendly and that the troops had an obligation to protect them. They said the people in the camp believed they were safe from attack, that there was peace even though it had not been formally declared. Young Lieutenant Joseph Cramer told Chivington to attack the camp would be murder because Wynkoop had pledged his word of honor there would be no attack

Chivington told Cramer:

> The Cheyenne nation has been waging bloody war against the whites all spring, summer, and fall, and Black Kettle is their principal chief. They have been guilty of robbery, arson, murder, rape, and fiendish torture, not even sparing women and little children. I believe it right and honorable to use any means

under God's heaven to kill Indians who kill and torture women and children. Damn any man who is in sympathy with them.

From the ridge John Chivington sent a detachment to capture a large herd of five hundred ponies south of the village and another detachment to capture a somewhat smaller herd on the north. If these people could fight on horseback they were fearsome opponents indeed. Without horses, there might even be no battle. He ordered the two detachments not to shoot unless they were fired upon first. The rest of the troops were aligned for action and the howitzers were loaded and aimed at the sleeping camp. The first detachment captured the larger herd, but the smaller herd broke away and galloped toward the village. The soldiers tried to head it off, got too close to the camp, and the Indians, now running out of their tepees, began firing at them. The detachment was soon "heavily engaged" and John Chivington ordered a general advance. The "Bloodless Third" surged forward to avenge the summer's atrocities.

From that moment no one alive today knows exactly what happened. The rest of the battle, or massacre, is shrouded in controversy. There is *some* agreement on the basic outline of what took place. The Coloradoans' first charge was repulsed by a line of approximately one hundred warriors. A second charge, both frontal and on both flanks, drove the Indians back along the creek where they took up the fight from pits dug into the sandy banks. The hostilities lasted until about four in the afternoon, when Chivington had his troops assemble in one area of the village. Most of the Cheyennes and Arapahos in the camp escaped in the direction of Smoky Hill. Probably many of the women and children got away on ponies that stampeded into the village at dawn. But this is the point at which most of the controversy begins.

There was no argument when Chivington and the troops first returned to Denver. They were heroes—glorious heroes. The Colorado Third—no longer "bloodless"—was mustered out late in December and Colonel Chivington's commission ended on January 6, 1865. He had been in the military about three and one-half years.

Before long the heroes of the Sand Creek battle were being charged not only with having perpetrated a massacre of women and children, but with having horribly mutilated the bodies of their victims. The charges grew in number and the stories of scalping and mutilating developed in gory and gruesome detail. An investigation was demanded.

There were three. The army conducted a hearing to decide whether there should be a court-martial, and decided that none was warranted. General Curtis wrote: "There is so much political and personal strife in our service it is almost impossible to get an honest, impartial determination of facts."

Congress conducted two investigations. A great deal of testimony was recorded by people who were there. The problem is that so much of the testimony is contradictory. Some witnesses stated absolutely that Black Kettle was flying a United States flag on a flag pole in front of his lodge and that he had a white flag right below it. Lieutenant Joseph Cramer, who had no love for Chivington, testified that he saw no such flags. Others also denied the flag story.

There is not even approximate agreement on how many of the Indians were killed. The numbers "counted" range from 69 by a Captain Booth, and 123 by Corporal Amos Miksch, to Colonel Chivington's "between five and six hundred Indians were left dead upon the field." Other people who "counted" said: "one hundred and forty-eight," "between one hundred and one hundred and fifty," "seventy," "one hundred and twenty-five," "two hundred." There were also numbers like "four hundred," "three hundred," and "four hundred and fifty."

The Cheyennes carried off all their wounded and many of their dead. No one will ever be able to state exactly how many Indians were killed that November day.

Nor will anyone ever be able to make a decision about how many of the dead were women and children. The eyewitness accounts are again very varied. Indian trader John Smith, who hated Chivington, said half of the

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Cheyenne woman and child

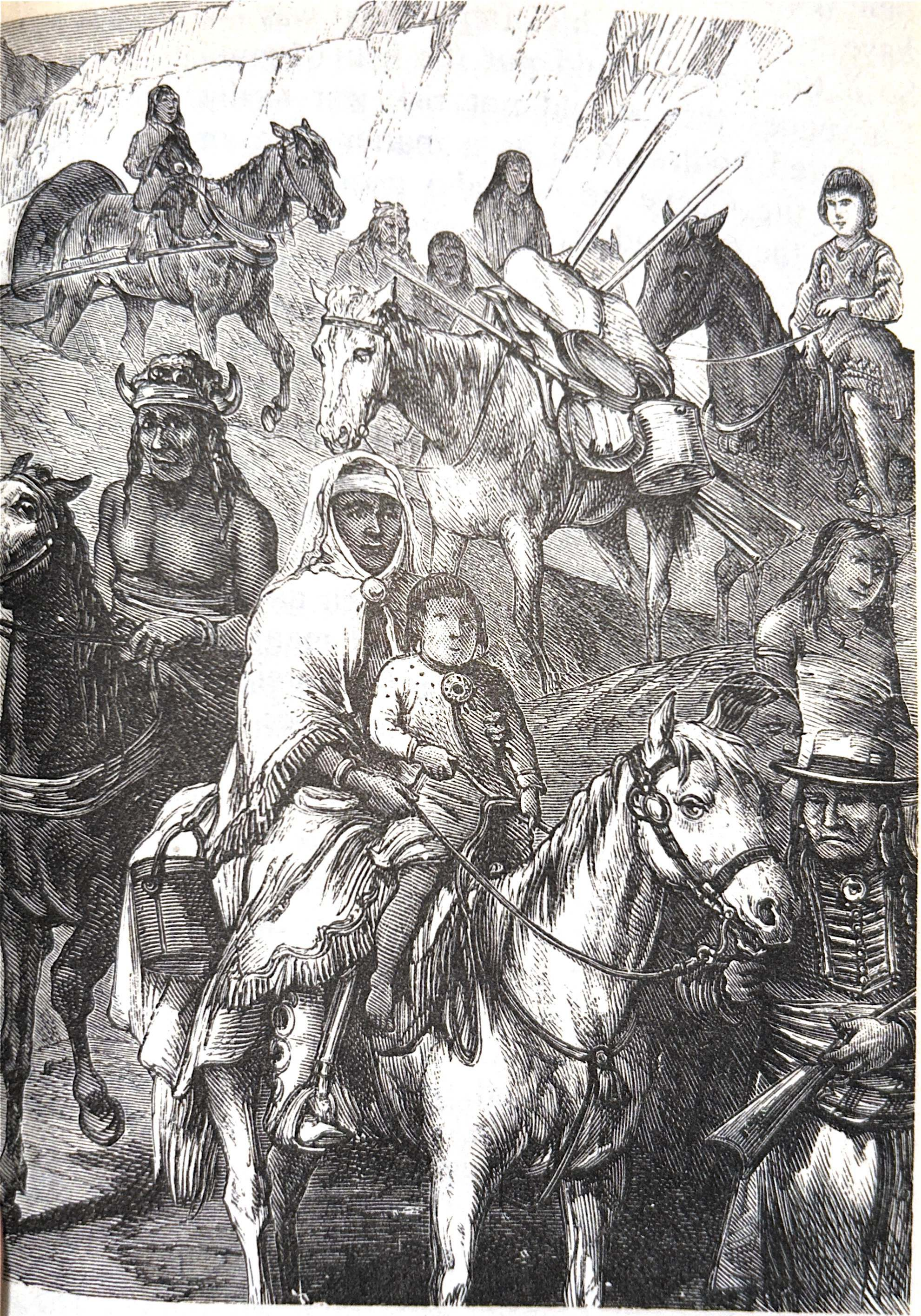
dead were men. Edmond Guerriere, a half-Cheyenne, said two-thirds were women and children. Corporal Miksch said only about "twenty-five of the dead were full-grown men." Major Jacob Downing testified, "I counted about twelve or fifteen women and a few children." Lieutenant Cramer and old Jim Beckwith testified that two-thirds twelve or fifteen women and a few children." Lieutenant Decatur claimed only a few were women and children. In Colonel Chivington's testimony is this statement: "I myself passed over some portions of the field after the fight, and I saw but one woman who had been killed, and one who had hanged herself; I saw no dead children. From all I could learn, I arrived at the conclusion that but few women or children had been slain."

The extent of the mutilation of bodies is also impossible to ascertain. There are gruesome eye-witness accounts about braining live children, cutting off fingers to get rings, cutting off ears to get silver earrings, and multi-scalping the same corpse. Robert Bent told the investigating committee he saw a dead Indian woman "cut open with an unborn child lying by her side. I saw the body of White Antelope, with the privates cut off."

Indian Agent Smith swore: "I saw the bodies of those lying there cut all to pieces, worse mutilated than any I ever saw before, the women cut all to pieces . . . children two or three months old . . . from sucking infants up to warriors."

Captain L. Wilson, however, said a young infant was found and "picked up off the field. . . . It was given to one of the Indian women. I saw some Indians that had been scalped." And Major Downing testified, "I saw no soldier scalping anybody, but saw one or two bodies which evidently had been scalped. . . . I saw no mutilated bodies . . . but heard that some bodies were mutilated."

There is no possibility now of determining who lied to the investigating committees. It is most likely there was some scalping and mutilating. Both whites and Indians practiced that kind of warfare in that area and in that era. Many of the volunteers believed the only way to fight Indians was the way Indians fought. The Cheyennes



N.Y.P.L.

Surviving Cheyennes were eventually forced to move to a reservation believed that if the body was mutilated the person would have to go through his afterlife that way—a horrible fate. So if the whites could put the fear of mutilation into the Cheyennes they would not risk war against whites who mutilated bodies. And as a matter of record, after Sand Creek the Cheyenne-Arapaho people did not again raid among the Colorado settlements.

Whether attack on the Cheyennes was unjust because they were then in a friendly status is not easily determined either. Most writers state they were, with no question about it. But Dr. Caleb Burdsal, assistant surgeon with the Third Volunteers, testified that later in the day of the battle, "a soldier came to the opening of the lodge and called my attention to" five or six white scalps found in the search of the lodges. "My impression is that one or two of them were not more than ten days off the head." Another doctor said he saw a great many white scalps—some freshly taken, one of them five to eight days before. War parties had certainly been out since the peace talks two months before.

Whether Sand Creek was a battle or a massacre will never be agreed upon by all who study it, but one bit of uncontested evidence should be given more attention than it normally is. The fighting lasted from dawn until about four o'clock in the afternoon. There was also sporadic fighting the next day with two soldiers and perhaps a dozen Indians being killed. Chivington had a total of fourteen troopers killed and forty wounded. There *was* some very real fighting. The valley was not a shooting gallery with Indians as clay pigeons.

It should also be pointed out that on November 29 Colonel John Chivington was not in command of disciplined troops. The Third was made up of hundred-day volunteers, partially trained, with little discipline. The volunteers were rollicking, boisterous, independent, vengeful men from the wild mining settlements of Colorado. There is no proof Chivington in any way encouraged atrocities.

Finally, it must be made clear that Chivington had political enemies in Colorado. He was being proposed as the first congressman to the House of Representatives in Washington when Colorado was admitted to the Union. He had rivals for that honor, and there was also a group of Colorado Territory officials who did not want Colorado to become a state. They would lose their appointments to office if statehood were granted, and they wanted to discredit Chivington and all others who were working toward that goal. Then, too, Indian traders were furious because Sand Creek had driven away the Cheyennes and Arapahos. The honest traders were angry, but the most vindictive ones, the ones who offered some of the most damning testimony, were the ones like D. D. Colley who were infamous for cheating the Indians and defrauding the government. How much is their testimony worth?

With the cloud of suspicion hanging over him, John Chivington went to Nebraska and started a freighting business in the spring of 1865. The next year his son drowned in a freighting accident; in 1867 his wife died. He sold his business and moved to California. Then he moved back to Ohio, married a widow, and operated a small farm. Tiring of that, he bought a newspaper and edited it. In 1883, he was nominated by the Republicans to be a candidate for a seat in the state legislature. His opponents brought up the old Sand Creek accusations, so he withdrew from what had become a bitter campaign.

The next year John Chivington, now sixty-three years old, was invited to speak in Denver at a meeting of the Colorado Pioneers, celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the settling of Colorado. A great reception was given to him and he told his story of Sand Creek. "I stand by Sand Creek," he said. The applause was great. His enemies were either silenced or had left the area; Colorado now accepted Sand Creek. His many friends and admirers wanted him to live among them. When he moved back to Denver he enjoyed an honored place among the citizens. He held several minor governmental positions and was on the editorial staff of the well-known *Christian Advocate*.

On October 4, 1894, cancer took the life of John Chivington. He had suffered for months and death was welcome, especially since he firmly believed there was a place waiting for him in heaven. A vast assemblage of Coloradoans honored him at his funeral.

In Colorado it is believed Colonel John Chivington did at Sand Creek what had to be done, and that what happened was not a massacre. It seems impossible that there will ever be complete agreement on the question of whether Sand Creek was a massacre or a battle. It does seem possible, though, that John Chivington may have been most unfairly treated by writers attempting to argue a point of view—writers who inadvertently omitted pertinent factors about testimony, and writers who even purposely quoted only that testimony which furthered their arguments.

Battle or massacre? Chivington innocent or Chivington guilty? Whatever the answers to those questions there can be little doubt that Sand Creek occurred because of white incursions, government mismanagement, broken treaties, and the fact that there were not only bad white men but that there were bad Indians.

John Chivington

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ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Cochise

Chapter 7

COCHISE

Defender of His People

JESUS SALVADOR was a pretty Mexican girl. Unwittingly, she was the indirect cause of ten years of cruel Apache war in southern Arizona Territory. It was a war that cost the lives of about fifteen thousand white Americans and millions of dollars worth of horses and cattle. One United States army officer said the war cost the United States $40 million. By the end of the ten years, five Civil War generals and five thousand troops had failed to subdue the few hundred Chiricahua Apaches led by their absolutely indomitable chief, Cochise.

Those Chiricahuas had made all of Arizona south of the Gila River uninhabitable for white men. Ranches, mines, and towns were abandoned or destroyed. Old Tucson, the walled city, was the only safe place for whites, and it was safe only if the white man stayed within its protective walls. On some raids the Chiricahuas boldly came within a few hundred yards of the walls and drove off cattle and horse herds. The white man's settling and civilizing of Arizona was stopped—stopped by an Indian who avidly wanted peace, who had tried to live in peace; but who had been betrayed, and who knew the Indian could not win, ultimately could only lose.

Jesus Salvador did not wish all this horror to take place. She was a pretty girl who was taken captive in a raid by some Apaches. She was taken as a wife by a warrior. (The

Apaches did not sexually abuse captured women. They either gave the women to their wives as slaves or took them as wives.) Jesus had a son by her husband. Either she didn't like the Indian way of life or didn't like her husband; somehow she managed to escape, taking her son. About five years later she was living with an Irishman, John Ward, who had a ranch in the beautiful Sonoita River valley southeast of Tucson.

In October 1860, while Ward was away from the ranch one day, some Indians appeared. No one is certain to which tribal group they belonged; they may have been Pinal Apaches, White Mountain Apaches, or Broncos (groups containing people from several tribes). They stole some of Ward's oxen, horses, and mules, and although they did not harm Jesus, they kidnapped her six-year-old son. When Ward returned he tracked the Indians east to the San Pedro River and convinced himself they were a part of Cochise's Chiricahua group, so he went to Fort Buchanan—twelve miles from his ranch—and demanded action. He wanted his stock back and he wanted the boy.

Colonel Pitcairn Morrison sympathized but he didn't have enough men to send any out hunting for livestock and a half-breed boy. Many weeks passed before the colonel could spare any men from regular duties. Finally, on January 29, 1861, he took action. He placed Second Lieutenant George Bascom in command of fifty-four men and assigned an interpreter named Antonio to accompany him. Bascom was only three years out of West Point and newly arrived in Arizona. Morrison told Bascom to get the boy, to use force if necessary, but Morrison did not understand Indians and Bascom knew even less about them. Neither of them knew Cochise.

Not knowing Cochise was their greatest fault. Had Bascom known even a little about the great Chiricahua, the decade of savage war need not ever have been generated. To George Bascom, however, an Indian was an Indian: they were all alike; they looked alike; they were not to be reasoned with; they understood only the language of force. His attitude, unfortunately, was typical of most whites in Arizona, and especially typical of army personnel.

Cochise was not an ordinary man. To understand the tragic sequence of events that occurred on February 5, 1861, one must know something about Cochise. He was very tall for an Apache—over six feet. He had broad shoulders, a great chest, and great strength. His eyes were large and dark, and his hair was straight and black. He was born sometime between 1812 and 1815. Maco, his father, was a chief. The Apaches had been at war with the Spanish ever since the Spanish had arrived in Apacheria. After several hundred years the soldiers and priests of Spain were no nearer the conquest of the Apaches than the first day they had arrived. When the Mexicans achieved independence in 1822 they continued the war with the Apaches—it was to be a war of extermination. Maco was enticed into a meeting to discuss peace, then he and two of his sons were treacherously murdered. Later, two more of Cochise's brothers were murdered in a similar situation. Cochise hated Mexicans. He differentiated between Mexicans and whites. He conducted continuous raids into Mexico and showed no mercy.

Regarding the American whites, he had arrived at a different policy. From his superb vantage points in the Apaches' mountains—called the Chiricahuas and the Dragoons by whites—he had watched the long wagon trains plodding through the valleys and the passes of his people. In the early fifties they had gone on to California. In the latter years, however, they had been establishing ranches and towns and forts in his country. He didn't like it and he didn't welcome the intruders, but he had finally decided that there were going to be too many of them to fight off. After several years of soul searching he could see that his people's centuries of nomadic life must come to an end. Perhaps they would not have to become farmers. They could raise cattle, they could even sell beef to the whites.

With this perspective for the future, Cochise allowed the Butterfield Overland Mail Company stagecoaches to pass through Chiricahua country on their way from St. Louis to Los Angeles. The company was even permitted to build a station right in Apache Pass and utilize the highly prized sweet-flowing springs there. And he started his people on the road to adapting to the new way of life by contracting with the Butterfield agents to supply wood and beef for the station. With his friendship Arizona began to fill with whites. Mining boomed. Ranches sprang up everywhere. Tucson grew and prospered—becoming the business center of Arizona. Cochise was leading his people in the path of peace—his people whose way of life had been raiding and war since time immemorial. He had given his word. There was nothing more sacred to Cochise than his honor.

The shavetail, Lieutenant George Bascom, did not believe there were Indians who valued honor; he did not know Indians are like other humans, some are honorable, some are not. He arranged a meeting with Cochise in Apache Pass, near the Butterfield station. He put a white flag on his tent and alerted his troops to surround it when Cochise was safely inside. Bascom was not a man of honor.

Cochise knew of no reason to distrust the men in blue. He could have destroyed them at any time as they journeyed to and through Apache Pass. He knew the movement of all men in his country. He received the information by smoke signals and inexhaustible couriers.

Trustingly, Cochise believed he was making a social call and he brought along his wife, son, a brother, and two nephews. When they entered the tent and were seated, Bascom ignorantly, or uncaringly, observed none of the amenities of the Apache way of life and immediately confronted Cochise with the accusation that he had kidnapped the boy and run off the stock. Apparently, Cochise, who had a quick and violent temper when properly stimulated, either thought Bascom was playing some kind of game or decided to humor him because things had been going well with the whites.

The chief protested that he knew nothing at all about the case. He did offer to help find the boy—if the lad's description were given to him. He knew none of his own people would break the peace, and he had influence with other Apaches. It's quite likely he could have found the boy.

Then, according to reports, George Bascom said two things, neither of which he could possibly have gotten away with. "Cochise, you're a liar! You and your people are my prisoners until the child is returned!"

Cochise leaped to his feet, knife already in hand, slashed the tent and sprang to freedom, calling for the others to follow him. The guards around the tent, completely taken by surprise, recovered their senses, fired at Cochise as he ran in a low crouch, zigzagging among the rocks and trees. He was wounded in the leg but no soldier could trail him. His family was captured trying to follow him, and one of the nephews was pinned to the ground with a bayonet.

Lieutenant Bascom surely did not know that he was about to put the torch to Arizona. It was not yet too late to prevent that though. Cochise was ready to kill the whites in the pass, but it was more important to save his family. He needed some whites to offer in exchange.

That night a Butterfield stage, not knowing about the hostilities, was forced to run the gauntlet of Chiricahua rifles but got to the station when the driver cut the harness from a horse killed by Apache rifles. Cochise obtained no whites from the coach, but the next day the unsuspecting people in a small wagon train entered the pass and were attacked. Eight whites were killed and three were captured. Cochise appeared—out of rifle range—showed his captives and offered to exchange their lives for his people's lives. Bascom said no exchanges until the kidnapped boy was brought in.

The Chiricahuas fired sporadically at the troops and civilians in the station, pinning them down so they could not get to the springs for water. There were wounded troopers and the need for water was soon going to be desperate. At this point some of the civilians were pleading with Lieutenant Bascom to exchange hostages with Cochise and make peace. The lieutenant probably could not en-vision himself reporting to Colonel Morrison that he had failed his first assignment. He refused any exchange that did not include the small son of Jesus Salvador. Bascom still did not believe that Cochise did not have the boy.

The manager of the station for the past several years was a man named Wallace. He had come to know Cochise, had dealt with him honestly, and had entertained him socially. He now volunteered to try to talk to Cochise, to work out some peaceful plan. He knew the danger. Cochise at peace was a most different person from Cochise raging from insult and treachery, and at war.

Wallace took two employees of the station and carried a white flag. Cochise allowed them to approach. We don't know what was said at the conference, but the whites did not return to the station. The next day Cochise appeared again high up in the rocks, displayed his prisoners, now numbering six, and offered exchange. Again Bascom refused. Certainly he did not realize this was the last chance to save Arizona from all-out, general Apache war.

Wallace called to him, pleading, explaining the six of them would be killed and that war would begin. Sergeant Reuben Bernard now tried to reason with Bascom. Bernard had been in the West a long time and knew very well what was going to happen if the prisoners were not exchanged. He persisted so long in his arguments that the lieutenant placed him under arrest. (Later he was tried by his commanding officer and released. He was apparently a brave and good man, and eight years later was serving with the rank of colonel.)

The authorities do not agree about what happened next. Either Cochise killed his prisoners and Bascom retaliated by hanging his, including Cochise's brother and two nephews, or Bascom hanged his prisoners and Cochise killed the six whites in revenge. Whichever way it happened the ancient law of a life for a life had been observed. It is believed that Bascom had managed to get a message back to Fort Buchanan; that reinforcements arrived, having captured three Chiricahuas on the way; and that Cochise's wife and son were taken back to Tucson and released.

There is no doubt that Cochise swore vengeance and decided to kill or drive out every white in Chiricahua country. He was a master practitioner of guerrilla war. He sent small parties of warriors to attack ranches and travelers at widely separated points. The attacks were usually made by warriors on foot. They suddenly appeared, and then they seemed to melt into the desert. They could hide behind a rock, a cactus, or a clump of bear grass. They could travel fifty or even seventy-five miles a day across the mesas, through the desert, and over the mountains. Pursuit was useless, and virtually impossible on horse. The Chiricahuas knew every trail, every canyon, every cave. They lived well though they carried no provisions. Never having been farmers, they had been experts for centuries in raiding and in utilizing the desert and mountain vegetation for food and other needs. And if they couldn't find food, they went without. They were tireless.

They had horses, but would just as soon eat them as ride them. No great gaudy feather headdresses for them. Their clothing was simple, except for their moccasins. They had to be especially designed for that country. The uppers were thigh-high and made of soft buckskin. The soles were of the toughest rawhide, and extended an inch or so beyond the toes, turned up to protect against rocks and cactus. The warriors wore their hair uncut but held back by a buckskin band around their head.

Unlike many other Indians, the Chiricahuas were excellent marksmen with rifle and bow and arrow. They acquired the best weapons available, by trade or raid. They obtained binoculars by trade or raid, and they were quick to adopt the army's technique of sending signals by heliograph, as well as continuing to use their own smoke signals.

Cochise knew the movements of every white civilian and soldier in his wide territory and made deadly use of his information. He was seemingly without mercy. Colonel Reuben Bernard later wrote he "personally knew of thirteen white men whom Cochise had burned alive, five of whom he tortured to death by cutting small pieces out

Chiracahua Apache warriors

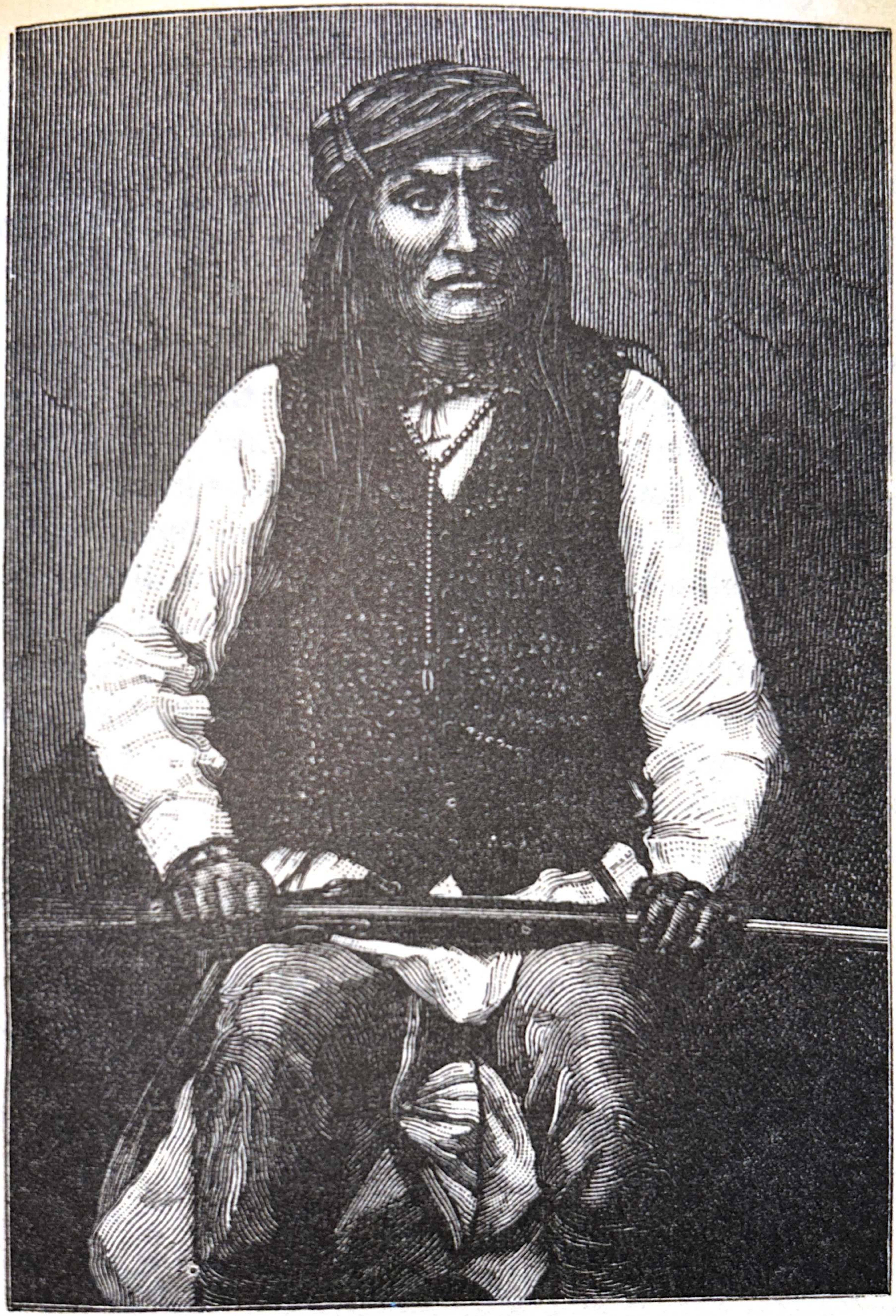
of their feet, and fifteen whom he dragged to death after tying their hands and putting lariats around their necks."

Then Bernard added, "This Indian was at peace until betrayed and wounded by white men. He now, when spoken to about peace, points to his scars and says, 'I was at peace with the whites until they tried to kill me for what other Indians did. I now live and die at war with them.'"

The Civil War broke out and most of the army troops in the western territories were called back to fight in the East. For several years Cochise had even less opposition than he had before. By 1865 the Chiricahuas had their country back. Colonel John Mason, sent out to command the Arizona troops in that year, described the situation in a report, "When I arrived, every ranch had been deserted south of the Gila. The town of Tucson had but two hundred souls. North of the Gila, roads were completely blocked, ranches abandoned and most of the settlements threatened with annihilation."

In the next six years the situation for the white man in Arizona improved only slightly. The army there was increased in size, and officers with good Civil War records were sent there to bring peace. A policy of extermination was tried, but by the time the policy was revoked by President Grant in 1871, the expenditure of many millions of dollars and the deaths of about one thousand soldiers had resulted in the extermination of approximately only one hundred Apaches.

There was probably never another Indian leader as brilliant at guerrilla warfare as Cochise. He was a master of improvisation. Once he heard there were thirteen well-armed miners coming toward Apache Pass carrying sacks of gold. He didn't have many warriors available at the time and he knew the whites would be very alert going through the pass. Seven of his braves were dispatched to a shallow gully along the trail some distance before the entrance to the pass. They rolled in the dust to make themselves less visible and waited three hours—immobile. When the miners were near, the Chiricahua suddenly fired a volley, killing six. The second volley killed the other



Mangus Coloradas

seven. Cochise had fifty thousand dollars in gold, for which he actually had little use.

This Indian who wanted peace but was driven to war never had many warriors at his disposal. He could never fight a battle that did not make use of ambush and hit-and-run tactics. Even during the years of cooperation with Mangus Coloradas (Red Sleeves), the great Mimbreño Apache leader, Cochise could never field more than a few hundred warriors at one time, despite the exaggerated accounts of some army officers that they fought seven hundred or a thousand Apaches at some battles. But his handful of warriors were so superb at their kind of warfare that they placed almost all of Arizona in terror and kept the United States army in that territory in disorder.

There was really only one instance in which Cochise was not victorious and it is doubtful if he was really defeated even then. By 1862 California had decided it would stay with Abraham Lincoln and the Union, and General James Carleton went east with about fourteen hundred Californians to help the Union. He had marched as far as Tucson when he received a message from General Edward Canby to hurry on to New Mexico and help him drive the Confederates out of that area.

Carleton sent advance troops commanded by Captain Thomas Roberts. There were three hundred men—including some cavalry. Their civilian guide was the famous Tom Jeffords. The advance guard marched forty miles across the scorching desert—in full uniform, with packs on their backs. Cochise had known they were coming, of course, and had prepared for them in a most unusual way. He had moved rocks around on the sides of the pass, creating breastworks. It was probably the first time any western Indians had created such defenses.

When Roberts's troops were well into the pass the Apaches screamed their hair-raising yell and began a very effective fire with rifles and bows and arrows. The nearly exhausted, thirsty soldiers couldn't see anyone to shoot back at. Roberts withdrew from what was an untenable position, but he knew he had to get to water, and he decided there were "several hundred Indians" concealed up above who were determined to keep him away from the springs. Mangas Coloradas and his Mimbreños had joined Cochise, so there probably *were* several hundred Indians in this instance.

Roberts had an ace card to play that the Apaches knew nothing about. He had two howitzers—mountain howitzers, small enough to be transported in rough terrain. He hoped the new weapons would be too much psychologically for the Apaches. Those howitzers couldn't really do too much damage because the gunners couldn't see anyone to shoot at. But they commenced firing into the rocks. The Indians were apparently terrified of the "wagon guns that shoot twice"—there was the explosion when the gun fired and then the explosion when the shell hit. The sound concussions bounced off the rocks. Shell fragments and pieces of rocks ricocheted wildly. The Apaches always had believed a dead warrior is of no use to his tribe or his family. Only the foolish would fight when the odds were against him. This seemed to be one of those times when it would be foolish. Cochise and his men withdrew beyond howitzer range and the troops moved on to the lifesaving springs.

For some reason when Carleton arrived the next day, expecting a real fight in his march through the pass, there was no fight. It may have been that the Apaches decided they wanted no more of the howitzers, or it may have been because Mangas Coloradas was injured in another action outside the pass. that the Apaches decided to allow Carleton to pass through. This wasn't an Apache type of fight anyway. Pitched battles with fourteen hundred soldiers against a few hundred warriors were foolish. So Carleton marched on to Mexico to help General Canby drive the Confederates out of New Mexico.

When General Canby had contacted Tom Jeffords in 1862 to take the message to Carleton about coming to New Mexico. Jeffords decided he could not refuse to help his country. This was the first step in what was to become a vital episode in Arizona history, made possible by a most remarkable relationship between Cochise and Jeffords. Captain Jeffords gave up his carefree life of prospecting for gold. He had been roaming around in southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona for several years and knew the country as well as any man. He had been born in Chautauqua, New York, in 1832. Prior to his western adventures he had been a captain on the Great Lakes and on the Mississippi.

For a while Jeffords served as scout and courier with the army, and then in 1865 took on the job of getting the mail from Fort Bowie (near today's Bowie, Arizona) to Tucson, perhaps 125 miles by the trail used at that time. All of the trail was in Cochise country. The Chiricahuas didn't want the mail—none of them could read it. They did, however, make use of the leather in the saddlebags. Mostly they attacked the mail riders as part of their plan to drive the whites out of their country. It is not certain how many riders Jeffords lost, but there were approximately fourteen killed in the first sixteen months. Jeffords himself was seriously wounded trying to deliver mail to the mail-hungry residents of Tucson.

Finally, he decided upon a bold, perhaps suicidal, action: to ride into Cochise's stronghold alone and talk to him. He had heard the great chief was a man of honor. There was a friendly Chiricahua living just outside of Tucson whom Jeffords hired to teach him the Apache language, then he was to guide him part of the way and give him directions for the last, dangerous part of the trail. Before the Apache turned back he sent up a smoke signal meaning one man approaching on a peaceful mission. The Chiricahua vedettes would not miss it.

Jeffords was allowed to ride right into the stronghold without harm. He dismounted with the wary hostile eyes of many Indians upon him. He handed his rifle and revolver to an Indian woman, telling her he wanted them back when he left. He walked to the lodge of Cochise and, after observing the usual amenities, began to plead his case. For seven years no white man had been close to Cochise and lived. There was something about the audacity and courage of the tall, sandy-haired and -bearded

Jeffords that attracted Cochise. He listened to Jeffords' case but did not make an immediate decision. The white man would remain as a guest until the decision was made. There were long conversations over a period of several days. Each of the men found an indefinable something in the spirit of the other. It was as if they were brothers of some sort. They understood each other as if they had been closely associated for many years.

Cochise not only agreed to allow the mail riders to pass through his country but promised he would protect them from other Indians, which he did. Cochise invited Jeffords to return any time; "Sandy Whiskers" would be welcome and safe. Jeffords often went to see Cochise after that. Their nations might be at war but the two men were at peace with one another.

It is through Jeffords that we know much of what we do about Cochise. In the latter years of his long life Jeffords was a close friend of John Rockfellow, who had a pamphlet privately printed telling many things about Cochise. Rockfellow bought the land that included Cochise's stronghold in the Dragoon Mountains. Today that beautiful mountain fastness is a National Park that can be visited by any interested person.

The great chief had two wives. One, the matriarchal head of Cochise's lodge, was the comely daughter of Mangas Coloradas and his Mexican wife—to keep whom Mangas fought two knife duels to the death. The gift of his daughter was probably an effort on Mangas's part to establish a political alliance between Cochise's Chiricahuas and Mangas's Mimbreños. The two chiefs were very close friends and were often allied in undertakings against white men.

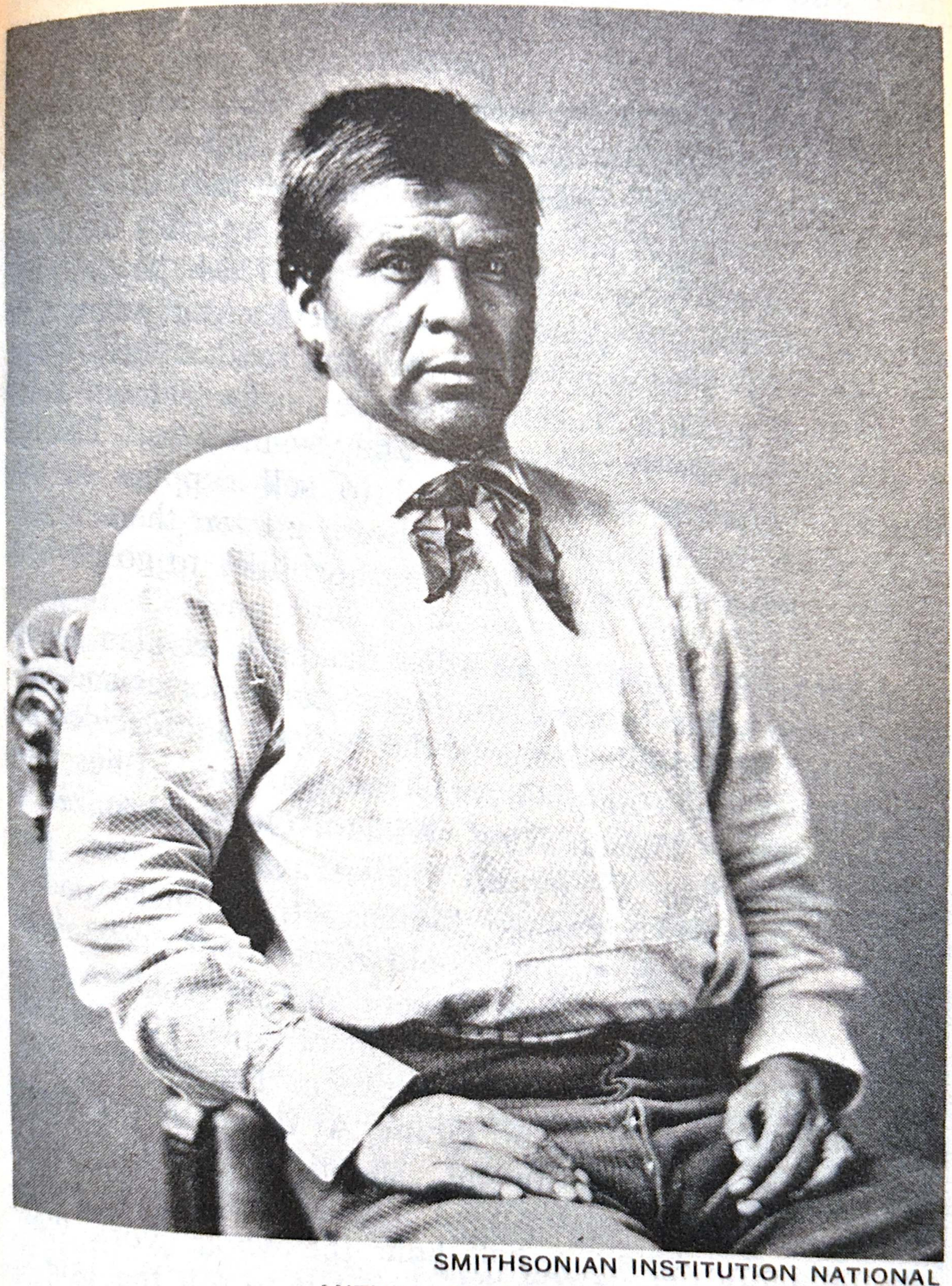
From Jeffords, via Rockfellow, we know that Cochise was a man of very complex nature, that he loved and he hated. He sometimes drank far too much tiswin (mild beer made from fermented corn) and sometimes beat his wives. Like all men he was often a victim of his pride. Sometimes he was cruel and tortured captives, especially Mexicans, whom he hated with a great passion. But he was also a man who placed honor above most other things—unlike the whites, he never broke a treaty. He was a thinking man who often reflected on such matters as the possibility of life after death. He was of his people: hardy, warlike, mobile, wandering over hundreds of miles of his country, never dwelling any place for long.

Beautifully muscled and much taller than the average Chiricahua, fearless in raids and hunts, his charismatic character held his central Chiricahuas in awe and reverence. His decisions were theirs. When he gave his word that the mail riders would be protected, any warrior who disagreed would have to fight him or leave the group. Great decisions, of course, were made in council with subchiefs.

Cochise and Sandy Whiskers became such brothers that Cochise in a few years offered Jeffords the greatest honor he could bestow. He asked him to be a blood brother. The rite was performed with great ceremony, although it is not certain whether the two men drank of each other's blood or held their carefully cut wrists together for the blood to intermingle.

Jeffords always knew where Cochise's group was—in the Graham Mountains, the Dragoons, the Chiricahuas—and he would spend days at a time with them. The matter of war between the whites and the Indians never interfered.

Most of the whites in Arizona and in New Mexico wanted the Indian war stopped. Many people in the East also thought it was a senseless war and wanted it stopped. Cochise knew that no matter how many whites the Apaches killed there were more coming to fill their places. On the other hand, when an Apache was killed he knew there was no one to take his place, in war or in his lodge; there was only one more family with no man to provide for it, one more grieving woman, and more fatherless children. But Cochise knew, too, about broken treaties, about Indian people herded together on reservations in strange lands and with alien people. He knew about Indians subjected to fraudulent Indian agents, moth-eaten blankets, starvation rations, and being told to farm unfertile



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Chief Eskiminzin

land and not being shown how to do it. Some Apaches surrendered. Cochise's Chiricahuas fought on—horribly successful.

In April 1871 some hungry Indians had been conducting raids on ranches near Tucson and south to Tubac and San Xavier. Chief Eskiminzin, some months earlier, had brought five hundred of his Aravaipa Apaches from the west to Camp Grant asking for peace. These people were apparently living in peace, cutting wild hay and selling it to the garrison. The army was providing food rations. There were men around Tucson, however, who did not want any Apaches to live in peace. They wanted war. The infamous "Tucson Ring" wanted to sell supplies to the army posts in Arizona. If there were no war there would be no troops, so they wanted the hostilities to go on and on.

A Mexican named Jesus Elias headed a civilian group that chased some Indians running off some horses and cattle. Elias's group killed one of the Indians and decided he was one of the Camp Grant Aravaipa band. Elias and another of the Tucson Ring, William Oury, organized a secret expedition to punish the Aravaipas. They put together ninety-two Papago Indians—traditional Apache enemies as long as anyone could remember—forty-eight Tucson citizens of Mexican descent and six Anglo-Americans. They set out at dark the night of April 29, crossed the fifty-five miles of desert between Tucson and the sleeping Indians near Camp Grant. At dawn they rushed into the Indian encampment, shooting anybody who moved. Oury reported frankly, "The attack was so swift and fierce that within a half hour the whole work was ended, and not an adult Indian was left to tell the tale."

As has been the case so often, no one is certain how many Aravaipas were killed. One surgeon reported twenty-eight women and children. Another witness reported eighty-five, "of whom eight only were men." Lieutenant Royal Whitman, commander of the garrison at Camp Grant, stated: "killed and missing, about one hundred and twenty-five; eight only were men."

Whatever the actual truth, Cochise believed it was a massacre, and went on fighting. At least his people would not be shot down while sleeping. In May Cochise put an end to a man who had been one of his most efficient and relentless pursuers. Lieutenant Howard Cushing had been in the West for three years chasing Apaches and had destroyed a few of their rancherias. He was able, tireless, and one of the few successful Indian fighters in the Southwest. He and his Third Cavalry had traveled thousands of hard miles over deserts and mountains and had killed many Indians. Cushing was hot on the trail of Cochise, but Cochise was apparently leading him on—into an ambush. On May 5, 1871, Lieutenant Cushing rode into a canyon in the Whetstone Mountains near Bear Springs. Cochise sprang the trap. The first volley dropped Cushing and hand-to-hand fighting followed. Sergeant John Mott led a few survivors to safety.

Meanwhile, the reports of the Camp Grant "massacre" had reached the East and many people there were sickened and began demanding an end to the policy of extermination. President Ulysses Grant was really a kindly man and he, too, abhorred the situation. He ordered an investigation and a trial of all the "massacre" participants or, he said, he'd place the entire Arizona Territory under martial law. The president had ordered the trials to be held in civilian courts. After a mass trial the jury deliberated twenty minutes and acquitted everybody connected with it. In Arizona there was nothing wrong with killing Apaches. Then Grant directed the War Department on July 21, 1871 to "locate the nomadic tribes upon suitable territories, and bring them under control of the proper officers of the Indian Department." He sent Vincent Colyer, secretary of the Board of Indian Commissioners, as his personal emissary with the powers to carry out his order—to make peace with the Apaches.

Colyer was an honest man who dealt fairly and had sympathy for the Indians. Cochise had long been weary of war. He felt that perhaps he could trust Colyer and at Colyer's instigation agreed to a meeting with General Gordon Granger, to talk peace. Toward the end of the talks Cochise delivered an eloquent speech which was recorded by one of the men present. Here is some of what he said to Granger:

> . . . I have come with my hands open to you to live in peace with you. I speak straight and do not wish to deceive or be deceived. I want a good, strong, lasting peace.
>
> When I was young I walked all over this country, east and west, and saw no other people than the Apaches. After many summers I walked again and found another race of people had come to take it. How is that? Why is it that the Apaches want to die . . . ? They roam over the hills and plains and want the heavens to fall on them. The Apaches were once a great nation; they are now but few, and because of this they want to die. . . . Many have been killed in battle. You must speak straight so that your words may go as sunlight into our hearts. Tell me, if the Virgin Mary has walked throughout all the land, why has she never entered the wigwam of the Apache? Why have we never seen or heard her?
>
> . . . When I was going around the world, all were asking for Cochise. Now he is here—you see him and hear him—are you glad? If so, say so. Speak, Americans and Mexicans. I do not wish to hide anything from you nor have you hide anything from me. I will not lie to you; do not lie to me.

During the talks there had been a suggestion that Cochise's people would live on the Tularosa Reservation in western New Mexico, about 180 miles north of Chiricahua country. Cochise concluded his speech with these words about the proposal:

> That is a long ways off. The flies on these mountains eat out the eyes of the horses. The bad spirits live there. I want to live in these mountains. I have drunk of these waters and they have cooled me; I do not want to leave here.

General Granger solemnly—and probably in all sincerity—gave his word that the Cochise Chiricahuas would be allowed to live in their own country. Cochise directed his people to stop the war. The whites wanted to live in peace with the Apaches. Cochise, the man of honor, settled back to help his people in their adjustment to reservation life. But within a few months some people in Washington decided there were too many Indians too widely dispersed—perhaps occupying too much land the whites wanted. A directive was issued called a concentration policy. The Chiricahuas were ordered to move to Tularosa. Another treaty broken.

Cochise, followed by about a thousand Apaches, broke out of the reservation. It was war again—Apache war. Within a year, September 1871 to September 1872, the Apaches had made fifty-four attacks, all over the Southwest, had killed forty-four people, wounded sixteen, and run off thousands of dollars' worth of livestock. The Tucson Ring was happy and growing wealthier.

But President Grant believed a lasting peace could be established. He sent two generals to the southwest. General George Crook was to "tame" all the Apaches except Cochise's Chiricahuas. To General Oliver Otis Howard was assigned the job of making a peace with Cochise. Apparently the president believed Cochise could not be "tamed" by soldiers. He had heard that Cochise was a man of honor and was very religious. Howard, known as the Christian General, was to work out a peace—on almost any terms that would take Cochise off the warpath.

General Howard had lost an arm in the Civil War at the battle of Fair Oaks, and had won the Medal of Honor; he fought at Chancellorsville, and was cited for valor at Gettysburg. He was also the founder and president of Howard University. He was indeed religious, often dropping to one knee for communication with God, and referring to and quoted from the Bible often. He was sincere about peace with the Chiricahuas, and Grant had given him carte blanche—agree to whatever was necessary, if Howard thought it could work.

N.Y.P.L.

General Oliver Otis Howard

When the general arrived in the Southwest he heard about the relationship between Jeffords and Cochise. He found Jeffords, told him why he was in the area, and asked if Jeffords would take him to Cochise. Jeffords replied, "Will you go there with me, General, without soldiers?" The general would have to be unarmed, he also pointed out, but he could take one aide. A brave man, Howard agreed to the conditions and decided he would take his aide, Captain John Sladen. Jeffords arranged for two Chiricahua guides: Chie, a nephew of Cochise, and Poncé, whose father had been a good friend of Cochise and Mangas Coloradas.

The small party left western New Mexico in September 1872. Jeffords had been in New Mexico for several months and did not know where Cochise was at the time. Chie and Poncé thought he was in his stronghold in the Dragoon Mountains. When they were still one hundred miles from the stronghold the guides made a stop to send a smoke signal; these people were coming in peace. Otherwise the group might be ambushed before the warriors knew who was in it or that they came in peace. From that point until the arrival at the stronghold, stops were made several times a day to send the signals. The travel was difficult for General Howard, who was past forty years of age and not accustomed to the rigors of horseback travel across the desert and through mountains, but he was a man of courage.

Howard recorded his thoughts when he finally arrived at the stronghold, a place where ten defenders could hold off three hundred attackers. Jeffords introduced Cochise and the general later wrote:

> *He gave me a grasp of the hand and said very pleasantly: "Buenas dias." His face was really pleasant to look upon, making me say to myself, "How strange it is that such a man can be the robber and murderer so much complained of." . . . We walked together, and sat down side by side on the blanket seat beneath a fine spreading oak. . . .*

Cochise questioned Chie and Poncé for almost ten minutes about the situation. Then using Jeffords as interpreter, he asked Howard his purpose, and the conversation was recorded in Howard's writings.

"I came with the hope of making peace between you and the citizens, and of thus saving life and property."

Cochise said: "I am as much in favor of peace as anybody. I have not been out to do mischief for the past year. But I am poor; my horses are poor and few in number. I could have taken more on the Tucson road, but have not done it. I have twelve captains out in different directions who have been instructed to go and get their living."

Howard said: "I should like to make a common reservation on the Rio Grande for the Mimbreño and Chiricahua Apaches."

"I have been there and like the country and rather than not have peace will go and take such of our people as I can, but I am sure it will break my band. Why not give me a reservation here or at Apache Pass? Give me that and I will make peace, protect all the roads, and see that no property is taken by the Indians."

"Perhaps the government would be willing to give you a reservation in that vicinity, but I think it much better for you and your people to go to Canada Alamosa."

Cochise asked, "How long will you stay? Will you stay until I can get my captains in and have a talk with them? I cannot make peace without their advice."

"I came from Washington to meet you for the purpose of making peace, and I will stay as long as necessary."

Cochise said that it would take about four or five days to get his chiefs all into the stronghold. Howard agreed to wait. Apache Pass was mentioned and Cochise spoke with great bitterness:

> We were once a numerous tribe, living well and at peace. But my best friends were taken by treachery and murdered. Apache Pass is the worst place. There six Indians were killed by Bascom and their bodies were left hanging until they were skeletons. The

> Mexicans and Americans kill an Apache whenever they see him. I have fought back with all my might. My people have killed many Mexicans and Americans and have captured much property. Their losses are greater than ours; yet I know we are all the time diminishing in numbers. Why do you shut us up on a reservation? We want to make peace, and we will faithfully keep it; but let us go wherever we please, as the Americans do.

Howard knew that would not work. He told Cochise that all the land did not belong to the Chiricahuas, but rather to God. He said all God's children had an interest in it, so there must be boundaries—for everyone's protection. Otherwise some "rough" whites might shoot at some Indians, or some young warriors might decide to go on a raid, then the "peace would be at an end." When Cochise said the aggressors had been the whites, Howard said many whites agreed, but "now we want such horrid work as war, murder, and robbery to close."

Cochise answered, "I am glad you came."

In a few days the important chiefs arrived and the council began. Cochise was the spokesman for the council and told Howard that the Chiricahuas must have their own land as their reservation. The general finally agreed. Then Cochise made one more demand that absolutely had to be met. Jeffords must be the agent for the reservation. Jeffords said no. He knew what the troubles would be, the political chicanery, the cheating, the fraud, the starvation rations, and trying to keep the young warriors content so they would not go on raids. But Cochise said there would be no treaty without Jeffords as agent.

No one wanted peace more than Jeffords, so he finally agreed, on conditions never heard of before. He was to have absolute authority—no political interference of any kind. No white man, soldier, general, or civilian could enter the reservation without his permission. They were amazing conditions, but Howard had the president's carte blanche. He accepted.

The treaty was completed and accepted by both sides on October 1. Twelve days later it was confirmed in Washington. Cochise was at peace again with the whites, after twelve terrible years.

Cochise said, "Hereafter the white man and the Indian are to drink of the same water, eat of the same bread, and be at peace."

The great chief who wanted peace was faithful to the terms of the treaty until his death, two years later. The Cochise Chiricahuas went to work—not farming, for they could not bring themselves to that "womanish" occupation yet. They supplied wood and cut hay for the military posts in the area. And despite the efforts of Tom Jeffords the government rations and blankets were nearly nonexistent during most of the first year. But Cochise kept his warriors under control despite the near-starvation situation. He did allow some raids into Mexico, believing he had no treaty with the Mexicans.

Finally Jeffords was able to acquire decent rations and by August 31, 1873, he could report to the secretary of interior that the situation was "more satisfactory than ever hoped for." The whites were safe and the Chiricahuas' faith in the word of the white man had been restored.

On one of the raids into Mexico Cochise was wounded, according to John Rockfellow, and he never recovered his health. His death was months in coming, as he grew steadily weaker. Jeffords was with him for much of the time, but had to leave for some duties at the agency office. When he was about to leave Cochise asked, "Chickasaw (brother), do you think you will ever see me alive again?"

"No, I do not think I will. I think that by tomorrow night you will be dead."

"Yes, I think so too—about ten o'clock tomorrow morning. Do you think we will ever meet again?"

Jeffords said, "I don't know. What is your opinion about it?"

"I have been thinking a good deal about it while I have been sick here, and I believe we will; good friends will meet again—up there."

"Where?"

"That I do not know—somewhere; up yonder, I think," as he pointed to the sky.

The next morning he asked some warriors to carry him up to a little higher altitude so he could watch the sun rise over the ranges to the east.

At about ten o'clock he died.

Tom Jeffords attended the funeral ceremonies. Later, he told people that Cochise's body was buried in the east stronghold where he died (in the Dragoons). He said many horses were ridden back and forth many times over the grave so the curious and the ghoulish souvenir seekers would never know where it was.

However, he told one man another story and the ceremony he described is much more like an Apache funeral. Cochise's body was dressed in his best war raiment, decorated with war paint and wrapped in a splendid red wool blanket that had been given to him some years before. The body was placed on his favorite war horse, with a warrior sitting behind him to hold the body upright. Then a long procession followed up into the mountain to a huge cave that had a deep fissure in it. The horse's neck was slashed and pushed over the edge to drop. Cochise's body was dropped into the fissure—with the many personal items he would need for his long trip.

Tom Jeffords lived for forty years more. In 1895 he took Cochise's grandson, Nino Cochise, to visit the old Chiricahua country where Nino had been born. On the trip from the Sierra Madres they stopped at old Billy Fourr's ranch and Nino remembered that Billy said, "if old Cochise was alive and could see what happened to his land he'd blow a gasket." Actually, he would have blown a gasket just eighteen months after his death. The nation's leaders in Washington decided the Chiricahuas would have to move to San Carlos in western New Mexico. Some moved, others went on the warpath and fought another ten years. The last Apache "uprising" was in 1886.

On April 8, 1971, *The Tombstone Epitaph* noted that a sculptured bust of Cochise was presented to Fort

Huachuca. In accepting it for the fort, Colonel Ben Anderson said, "Our history does not reflect that anyone ever outmaneuvered or defeated Cochise in battle . . . the great Chiricahua chief who recognized that the first duty of the soldier is the protection and defense of his people and his nation."

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General George Crook

Chapter 8

GEORGE CROOK

Indian Fighter, Indian Friend

THE STAGECOACH from the west approached Tucson. Hardly anyone in the old walled city cared much. The passengers, however, looked forward to relief from the jolting and bouncing, from the all-enveloping dust, from the stifling heat, and from the uneasiness of traveling through Apache country.

One man, holding a shotgun, wore a calm, benign expression. He had traveled more than a thousand miles, all the way from San Francisco. He had crossed the high Rockies, rolled through green valleys, forded rivers, and now had traversed a hostile desert of Apacheria. Though more than six feet tall, he was not big, but rather spare, sinewy and athletic. His fair hair was close-cropped and his beard parted at the point of his chin. His blue gray eyes were bright and alert.

To the other passengers he had seemed almost shy. Yet he had talked with them at times, pleasantly in a low soft voice. They had noticed he did not once curse—not even about the discomforts to which they were all subjected. At the stage stations he had not drunk any stimulant, not even tea or coffee, nor did he smoke or chew tobacco. Somehow, though, he conveyed the feeling that he was a man's man.

And they were right. He was Colonel George Crook in civilian clothes. He wore a uniform only when it was absolutely necessary—which was not often in his estimation. He had orders to assume command of the United States army's Arizona Department. His mission was to end the battles between whites and Apaches, hopefully by peaceful means. The Apaches had made their traditional homeland untenable for whites. The "dark and bloody" ground of Kentucky in Daniel Boone's time had never even begun to approach the blood and terror of Apacheria for the previous ten years. George Crook was assigned the job of rounding up the hostile Indians and putting them on reservations, as part of the government's established policy of taking over Indian lands.

Many officers had tried. All had failed. But the man who came into Tucson early in July of 1871, so unassuming that even the driver of the stage did not know who he was, had ideas about dealing with Indians. He had had experience in the north. He had been successful with the Shoshones and the Nez Percés. His ideas included being firm but fair. He believed Indians were people and must be treated like people. This philosophy was not widely held among the whites in Arizona, and George Crook was to find it nearly impossible to implement.

He had seen adversity before, however. He was born on a farm near Taylorsville, Ohio—not far from Dayton—on September 23, 1829, the ninth of ten children. His ancestors had come to this country from Scotland in the late seventeenth century and had fought in the American Revolutionary War. His father fought in the War of 1812 and then took up good land in Ohio.

When George was asked if he wanted to attend West Point he agreed to try it, although he was not enthusiastic. He graduated thirty-eighth in academic rank in his class of forty-three and became the only graduate with such a low class rank to become a major general. He was a roommate of Phil Sheridan who gained great fame in the Civil War, and the two cadets became friends for life.

As a young second lieutenant in the infantry Crook was assigned to his western duty in Oregon and Washington. He was a successful and resourceful shavetail and was promoted to first lieutenant in March of 1856. The next year he was seriously wounded in a skirmish against hostile Indians. He took an arrow in his side and the doctors finally had to give up their attempts to remove the head. He carried it in his body the rest of his life.

Despite the seriousness of his wound he surprised everyone by returning to active duty quickly and within a month was cited for successful action against the hostiles.

Crook was on duty in Washington Territory when Fort Sumter was virtually demolished on April 12, 1861. In May he was already in the eastern theater of war as captain of a regiment. By October he had been promoted to colonel of the Thirty-Sixth Ohio Volunteers. He made those volunteers into such a crack outfit that they were soon being called the Thirty-Sixth Regulars. He led his "Regulars" in West Virginia actions so ably that he was breveted a major in the regular army, especially for "gallant and meritorious" service in the battle of Lewisburg, where he was very seriously wounded. Soon he was awarded the brevet rank of brigadier general for "conspicuous bravery." He fought mostly in West Virginia and Tennessee until July of 1863, having been in action at South Mountain, Antietam, and Chickamauga. In July of the following year, he was promoted to major general and assigned to work with his old roommate Phil Sheridan in the successful campaign to eliminate the devastating Confederate raids up and down the fertile Shenandoah valley. After fighting in the decisive battle at Cedar Creek in March of 1865 he was given the assignment of commanding all the cavalry in Grant's great Army of the Potomac. One month later, April 9, Lee surrendered at Appomattox and Crook was there. General Grant was impressed with the work of the young major general.

Soon after Appomattox George Crook was given the regular (nonbrevet) rank of lieutenant colonel and sent back to the northwest. His assignment was to subdue the ferocious Shoshonis, who possessed some of the greatest light cavalry units the world has seen. He conducted a brief, tough, and successful campaign. Then he related with the Shoshones as he would with other people. They were grateful and respected him for his honesty and his efforts to obtain a fair deal for them. Ten years later they helped him in his battles with the Cheyenne and Sioux hostiles.

After he had put down a revolt of the Umatillas and stopped the Nez Percé raiding of settlements it was 1871, and in June the forty-two-year-old Crook left San Francisco to tackle his big job in Arizona Territory.

Although he arrived in Tucson in anonymity, he was immediately in charge. Before his first day had ended he had sent orders to all his unit commanders at forts and camps to come to Tucson immediately. As each man reported to him Crook obtained all that man knew about the country, about the trails, the fords, the rivers, the soil, and the climate. He found out about the troopers, their experience and their morale. Especially did he question his officers about the pack mules and the horses. He had a passionate interest in pack mules, knowing that the success of any campaign, in large part, lay with these animals. He made it his personal business to know about every mule on every expedition, about their health and eccentricities. The best men available were assigned to handle them, and he knew every man and his character. Nothing but the best quality materials was permitted to be used for the equipment. Often he spent an hour a day with the mules and their handlers. His mules could easily carry twice the weight the army said mules could carry, because of their physical condition, the excellent equipment (designed and made to fit each individual mule), and because of scientific packing. Crook's troopers always had the additional ammunition when it was needed, and his mule trains never failed in an emergency.

As each officer left after his first contact with the new commanding officer he discovered that he had told everything he knew that was pertinent, but that he had been told nothing. The colonel had confided nothing about his plans, yet he had been genial in a quiet way. There was not anything forbidding in his personality, but there was a dignity which precluded too much familiarity. Still, the officers were made to feel that the commander had a genuine interest in them as men, and in their careers in the army.

Within a few days the new commandant had decided upon his first action. It would be a "practice" expedition with five full companies of cavalry and some trained scouts. On July 11 the expedition was on its way at six o'clock in the morning, headed for Fort Bowie more than a hundred miles away, in the heart of Chiricahua country. Before the march ended it was to head north to Camp Apache, back west to Camp Verde and the town of Prescott, and then down to Tucson, six hundred and seventy-five miles and all of it in enemy territory.

George Crook was the first up in the morning and the first in the saddle. He wore an old canvas hunting outfit and a white pith helmet. He rode a strong mule named Apache and he carried a rifle across the pommel of his saddle. He was constantly alert. His eyes saw everything that moved, even at a distance. He noticed unusual depressions in the sand, deflected twigs, small signs, and cleverly concealed directions left by one Apache for another. He heard sounds most men didn't hear, and he detected odors most men didn't notice.

Throughout the expedition Crook kept scouts out to the sides, in front, and in the rear. When the officers in charge of them came in from their duties they reported to Crook. And they were asked to report *everything*. Not only did he question them about every sign of Indians, old as well as new, he also wanted to know about every kind of plant and animal they had seen, about swift roadrunners and quail, and smoke signals, and grazing land, and rivers and fords, and trees for fuel, and good locations for night camps. No experience or observation was too trivial to report—and to remember for future use. The scouts themselves soon discovered they could tell the colonel quite a bit about the abundance of flora and fauna that prospered in Arizona, and they were asked how the Apache made use of all of them. They marvelled at how much and how quickly the colonel learned.

When the expedition arrived at Camp Apache—only half completed—Colonel Crook held council with chiefs in the area. He talked to famous and powerful ones: Miguel, Pedro, Pitone, Alchise and Eskititsla. They told him they were at peace and wanted to remain at peace.

What Crook told them was what he was to say to all Indians. He told them it was no longer important who had started the trouble between Indians and whites, but it *was* important for them to understand the trouble could not continue. More whites were coming and the Indians could no longer live on wild game, which was already disappearing. The Indian must learn other ways, and the Indians and whites would have to learn to live together peacefully. The Indians would have to adapt to farming and raising cattle. If they did, and worked hard at it, they could become prosperous—more prosperous than the Mexicans they raided so regularly.

Crook explained that as long as the Apaches were peaceful he would protect them from the "bad" whites, but the chiefs would have to protect the whites from the "bad" Indians. Peaceful Indians were expected to help keep the violent Indians in line. If they let some of their people raid and steal and kill, it would be nearly impossible to protect those who did obey the law. He said he would try to find work for all who wanted it and the pay would be the same as paid to white men for the same jobs.

The colonel said he would always tell them the exact truth. He would never make a promise he could not keep, and he expected the chiefs to have the same policy.

The chiefs had heard this honesty policy before and were skeptical until Crook told them all promises he made would be written down and they would be given copies, then they would know he meant what he said. They also began to feel that this *Nan-Tan* (chief) was talking to them as one man to another man, not as a superior being to an inferior one. He told them that until the Apaches learned the customs and laws of the whites they would be safe only on reservations. As soon as Indians and whites trusted each other and remained at peace Crook believed they could live together, go to school together, and the Indian could go anywhere and live and work anywhere.

Then the colonel told the chiefs they should tell the others what he had told them. He would wait for a while, until there had been time for those out in the mountains to hear what he had said, then he would go out there and those Indians who were still hostile would come peacefully to the reservation or he would have to kill them.

The colonel established his headquarters at Prescott and while he waited for his policy to be made known to all the Apaches, he determined to learn about the country. With a small escort he traveled at every opportunity, often for days at a time. Not only was he learning the country, he was keeping in physical condition for the trouble he was certain would come. He knew the Apaches did not trust the whites. They wouldn't believe him until he had proved himself, and they would not believe Vincent Colyer.

Colyer was secretary of the Board of Indian Commissioners and President Ulysses Grant had sent him to Apacheria as his personal emissary to obtain peace. The president was a humane man who wanted peace and he hoped Colyer could achieve it. But Grant was also a practical man and that is why he had ordered Crook to the scene. While Colyer was making his sincere efforts, Crook continued to prepare himself and his troops—and his mule trains. While Colyer held councils with chiefs Crook could not sabotage his efforts, so he didn't assemble a large force and he didn't launch an offensive. He only tried to protect the whites from raids, an almost impossible job since the Apaches attacked isolated ranches many miles from each other.

Crook also had to do something about the troublesome Paiutes and Hualpais tribes to the north. He made them his allies and they later sent warriors to help against the Apaches.

After a year of great effort Colyer and Grant had to admit that the attempt to make peace with the Apaches without using the army had not been successful. The president sent General Oliver O. Howard out to Arizona with instructions to make peace with the Chiricahuas under the great Cochise, but George Crook was given the task of militarily subduing the rest of the Apaches. He waited until November (of 1872) because he wanted to make the campaign a winter effort. His idea was to make it miserable for the Indians who would retreat up into the mountains, because of the low temperatures and snow in those altitudes. They would be more likely to surrender when the children and women suffered. Also, because of the cold the Indians would need campfires, and Crook's keen-eyed Indian scouts would detect even the small, nearly smokeless fires they would use.

Crook hired all the Apaches he could get. He believed it was important to fight hostile Indians with Indians who wanted peace. Another part of his reasoning was that the best way to find an Apache was to have another Apache look for him. The Apaches were paid the same wages he paid the whites, and he wanted that information passed around. Besides, every Apache with him was one less Apache against him. This policy of Crook's turned out to be a masterstroke despite continued opposition from many whites and some of his superior officers.

The colonel's campaign plan was to hit hard, cover a large area with army columns and to persevere relentlessly. Each column was to be self-sufficient, with its own scouts, its own pack trains with all supplies, and with a highly capable officer in command. Crook gave few orders, ever. He chose good men to lead, gave them an insight about what he expected to accomplish, and put them on their own initiative. They were to try for surrenders, but if they had to fight, they were to fight hard until every man against them had surrendered or been killed. No one was to harm a woman or a child, or mistreat a prisoner. There was no excuse for leaving the trail of fleeing Indians. If the horses played out, the pursuit was to continue on foot. There must be constant pressure; the Apaches must have no place to get away from it. The campaign was to be short and decisive.

The target for this thrust was the Tonto Basin. Raiding western Apache bands had been eluding troops in that mountainous area for years. Every detail of preparation had been carefully supervised by Crook. The pack trains were as superbly prepared as only he could prepare them. He had his columns so carefully disposed that no matter where the Apaches went someone was after them. Within weeks bands of Indians began to surrender; those that did not were hunted down. Many were killed as they returned from raids, many were surprised in what they thought were well-hidden and impregnable strongholds. It was the Apache scouts who found them and found ways to get troops up to them for the surprise attacks.

On December 27 Major William Brown's column surprised the wily chief Chuntz in Salt River Canyon. His troops killed seventy-four and captured eighteen—a rare defeat for that many Apaches, but Chuntz escaped and joined with Del-she. The two raided south to Wickenburg and came upon a small party of young Englishmen new to the country. They killed most of them outright, but tortured two of them to death. "One of the poor wretches rolled and writhed in agony, breaking off the feathered ends of the arrows, but each time he turned his body, exposing a space not yet wounded, the Apaches shot in another barb" (*On the Border With Crook*, p. 208).

Crook went right after this Chuntz and Del-She band, and surprised them at night up on the steep-sided Turret Butte. A few volleys ended the fight and it was the last in this campaign. The Tonto Basin was cleaned out when Cha-lipun came to Crook to make peace for 2300 western Apaches. He said his people were sick of war. They could not cook because smoke was seen by scouts, could not sleep for fear of surprise attacks. They could not keep warm in the mountains, and the valleys were full of soldiers. Hunting was impossible. Cha-lipun's warriors could not win the battles when the soldiers had so many Apaches on their side; they could not fight the whites and their own people, too.

Crook said if Cha-lipan kept the peace he would be the best friend Cha-lipan ever had, and the peace was to be with Americans, Mexicans, and the other tribes. The Apaches were to wear identification tags so the soldiers would know they were not hostiles. They would be treated exactly like whites and they must work like whites—the work would start right away on an irrigation project for farming. Crook said he would find markets for their crops and the money would be paid to the Indians directly—no middleman to siphon off profits. He also said he was hiring Apaches to act as a police force. Drunkards and thieves would be jailed if found guilty after being tried by Apache juries.

Crook knew he could not wait for Washington to send equipment for the irrigation project so he collected all the old shovels, spades, and picks from every camp and fort under his command and the work started immediately. The braves did the digging, and the women hauled the dirt in their woven baskets. They soon had a ditch five miles long, four feet wide, and three feet deep. They planted fifty-seven acres of melons and other truck garden crops the Indians liked.

The new emphasis was on individuals, not tribes or bands. Individuals were paid to cut wood or to cut hay and deliver it, individuals were responsible for their own actions, individuals were rewarded or punished. Apache juries were respected and feared. If they erred it was usually in being too severe. Crook helped some individuals start trading posts and most of them were honest and prospered.

He tried hard but was not successful in obtaining schools for all the children on the reservation. If the Indians were to be assimilated into the white man's society they must be educated in the white man's way—boys *and* girls. He did not believe in sending a handful of children away to a boarding school, to come back to a society that resented their superior skills.

In this project George Crook had to fight not only the Indians who still believed they could lead the old wild life of raiding, he also had to fight many whites. Many ordinary Arizona whites held great resentment against all Apaches for the burning and killing of the past ten years and demanded extermination of all Apaches. Most of them had no political influence and Crook could handle them. His greatest problem was the Tucson Ring or Indian Ring. This group was made up of businessmen who wanted trouble, wanted Indians on the warpath so they could sell supplies to the army and guns and ammunition to the Indians. If they could not have war then at least they had to have Indians on the reservations who had to be supplied with rations provided by the government, bought from the Ring. Self-sufficient Indians meant the end of swollen profits from government contracts.

The Ring, therefore, tried to discredit Crook and his methods. When that was not very successful they used their influence to get the Cha-lipan people moved off their reservation where their crops were good and the area was pleasant and familiar. They were moved to the San Carlos reservation, an unhealthy place. Some refused to go, slipped away and caused trouble. It was an outrageous move by the government, but most of the Apaches tried to live in peace, and George Crook continued to do his best for the people he had promised he would help. He kept most of them on reservations and he still found work for them and found markets for their crops. But he constantly had to fight the dishonest Ring contractors who put rocks in the bags of flour and sugar sold to the Indian, and who resold the cattle designated for reservations, and who cheated the Indians in every way they could contrive.

Colonel Crook said, "The American Indian commands respect for his rights only so long as he inspires terror for his rifle."

But Crook had brought peace to Arizona and President Grant appreciated what he had accomplished. In October of 1873, he promoted Crook to brigadier general, skipping over a number of very distinguished officers who expected to be granted that rank before Crook. The promotion brought some ill-feeling and controversy, but Crook was too busy to indulge in that kind of activity. He worked hard in Arizona for two more years, not only with and for Indians, but repairing forts, relocating some of them in more healthful stituations, and building good roads between forts. When his officers traveled through unmapped areas he required them to map them and file the maps at his headquarters. He required his officers to be constantly learning all they could about Indians, their ceremonies, hopes, religion, beliefs, and feelings. He believed much of the whites' trouble with Indians came about because they didn't understand Indians.

The War Department leaders in 1875 believed Arizona was under control, but that there was great Indian trouble about to erupt on the northern plains. The Sioux and the Cheyenne people were especially restive and dangerous. They were highly resentful about the failure of the government to live up to the provisions of the important treaty of 1867. In that treaty the Indians had been granted a huge tract of land that included the beautiful Black Hills and extended west to the Big Horn Mountains. There were supposed to be government-supported schools: one school for every thirty Indian children.

There were no schools, even after eight years of waiting, and more and more whites were appearing on Indian lands. The Cheyennes and Sioux knew, too, there would be more whites because reports of gold discoveries in the Black Hills were circulating wildly. The government had even attempted to obtain a treaty ceding the Black Hills to whites. The Indians had had enough of broken treaties, they were going to hold on to what they had. Some of the chiefs were proposing war. Little Big Man argued loudly they must make war or lose their hunting lands, and if there was gold the Indian should have the right to mine it or leave it in the ground.

George Crook was transferred in March 1875 to handle the seething Sioux and Cheyennes. He established his headquarters for the Department of the Platte in Omaha. His area included Nebraska and the territories of Wyoming, Utah, and part of Idaho.

Toward the end of 1875 whites began sneaking into the Black Hills and there were skirmishes as the Indians repelled them. It was obvious there would be serious trouble in '76. Crook tried to prevent it. He ordered whites out of the Black Hills until Congress had made a decision, and that helped for a while. But the Indians were preparing; they were buying rifles and ammunition in great quantities. There were some skirmishes in the spring and summer, but the situation was fairly stable. The whites started infiltrating the Black Hills again, and the government demanded the Indians come in and be enrolled on reservations.

Some of them came in, some quietly ignored the summons. And some of them sent word they would not do it. Sitting Bull's message asked, "Are you the Great God that made me?" He said if the white man wanted to talk he would have to come to Sitting Bull, but he pointed out the Sioux had no lands to sell and wanted no whites in their territory. There were probably fifty thousand Indians on the northern plains and it was becoming obvious that most of them were going to stick together and fight.

This helped make General Crook's problem much different from what it had been in Arizona. There he had innumerable small mobile bands on foot in mountains and deserts. Here he had great alliances on seas of grass. These Indians were great horse soldiers who moved rapidly and could charge quickly in large numbers. They could easily stampede large herds of cavalry horses and leave the men fighting on foot. They were apparently disdainful of the small number of soldiers garrisoned on the plains and believed the white troopers could be beaten wherever the Indians chose to fight them.

Crook decided upon another winter campaign and began the preparations. He would have to find a large band and destroy its village to show that the government meant what it said and that the army was capable. The end of winter was a poor time for war from the Indians' viewpoint. Their ponies were so winter-thin they could hardly pull a travois, let alone carry a warrior into battle. The Sioux and Cheyennes practically hibernated during the often below-zero days of northern plains winters.

The general followed the same policy that had worked so well in Arizona. He hired all the Indians he could get to serve as scouts—utilizing their great talents for this kind of warfare and lessening the number that had to be fought.

He made, as usual, the most complete preparations, and convened some of his forces in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Cheyenne was wild with excitement—about the coming Indian war and about being the jumping-off point for miners who were again invading the Indians' Black Hills, this time in great throngs.

Crook left excited Cheyenne and went north 90 miles to Fort Laramie, then 95 miles northwest to Fort Fetterman where all the troops were to rendezvous. On March 1, 1876, the campaigners left Fetterman to travel 150 miles up to the Powder River and the Big Horn Mountains. There were ten full companies of cavalry and four companies of infantry. But the troopers did not look like soldiers, in their winter clothing of furs and buckskins with fur-lined hats and fur leg-length overboots. They were well prepared, however, for the howling winds and the subzero temperatures. And they were a well-disciplined, trained army.

Small night attacks were begun by the hostiles, but no serious damage was done. Crook had his sentries posted carefully. On the fifth of March the Indians attacked in numbers, but Crook was ready. A few days later he gave orders for a two-week search for hostiles. There would be no wagon train, just mules. The only clothing anyone would have was what was on his back. One buffalo robe could be carried for night camp. Everyone would be on half-rations of bacon, hardtack, coffee, and sugar. There would be several columns, each independent, but the whole plan coordinated.

On the second day a blizzard hit with biting winds that drove the snow horizontally, stinging the faces of men and animals. The columns had to stop, and the men endured as best they could. The next day the storm had abated enough to continue the hunt, but the temperature plummeted downward until the mercury froze in the bulb of the thermometer—about forty degrees below zero. Icicles formed on the men's moustaches and beards. The mercury stayed down in the bulb. When the men ate they drew their forks through hot ashes so they would not strip the skin off their tongues. The bits on bridles for horses and mules were given the same treatment.

A deserted village of sixty lodges was found, and as the columns neared the Yellowstone River more deserted villages were discovered. At two-thirty in the morning scouts came to General Joseph Reynolds's column and reported they had been trailing a large war party. The trail led to a good-sized village and the column could get there by dawn for a surprise attack.

On March 17, just at daybreak, the troops were nearly in position, when a small boy came to the river to water some horses. He saw the troops and shrieked a war whoop. The charge was launched, but the boy's warning gave the Indians just enough time to run for some bluffs overlooking the valley. The Indians knew what they were doing. They shot at the horses, wounding some, killing others, and putting the attacking force in an unmanageable mess. One detachment had been successful in running off the Indians' herd of six or seven hundred ponies.

More troops came up and the Indians were pinned up in the rocks. While they were held there the troopers began to fire at the tepees, most of which did not burn. They exploded. They were filled with caches of gunpowder in kegs, metallic cartridges, lead and bullet molds. Lodgepoles flew through the air like small sticks, but none of the soldiers were struck by them.

A wounded Indian woman was found and brought in for treatment and questioning. She said there were one hundred lodges. It was Crazy Horse's band, and forty lodges of Cheyennes had just arrived, having escaped from the reservation that was presided over by the great Sioux Chief, Red Cloud, and called the Red Cloud Agency.

In the tepees was great wealth. Besides huge quantities of food, there were great buffalo robes, prime pelts of beaver, deer, and elk—all meant to be traded for more guns and ammunition. The troopers were in the process of collecting the food and the furs before firing at any more tepees, when General Reynolds ordered a precipitous withdrawal. None of the officers or men understood why, even though the warriors in the rocks were now pouring in well-aimed fire. No more tepees were fired at. No food was confiscated. No furs or robes or kegs of powder were taken or destroyed. It was retreat—at the moment of great victory.

When Crook came up—to help finish the job—he could not hide his bitter disappointment. Victory had been turned into defeat. And perhaps worst of all, the Sioux and Cheyennes would consider that they won an important victory. It would give them great confidence for the future.

Crook had no choice but to abandon the campaign; there was no longer a chance for surprise. He would try again in the summer. And when summer arrived the Indians were ready. Their ponies were fat and strong. Young men from the Red Cloud and Spotted Tail agencies were sneaking away to join the hostiles. There were now daily attacks on ranches and travelers. Cattle and horses were stolen. People were being killed.

George Crook knew it was futile to chase small war parties mounted on fleet ponies. He had to mount another massive campaign with swift-moving columns and smash the big bands, destroy their villages containing their supplies. He began his preparations again, planning to start in May. He went to the Red Cloud Agency to talk to the chiefs he thought were for peace, to seek their help, to hire their young men to scout and help fight the hostiles. The agent at Red Cloud Agency, for some reason, tried to prevent the general from talking to any of the chiefs. But Old Sitting Bull of the South (not related to the other Sitting Bull), Rocky Bear, and Three Bears came to talk anyway. They wanted peace and sent along warriors to help. The other chiefs at Red Cloud would not cooperate, even when Crook sent word that he wanted three or four hundred Sioux to help police their own people, and that if he didn't get them he would hire old Sioux enemies like Shoshonis, Crows, and Bannocks.

On May 29, 1876, Crook was ready and led off with a mile-long line of cavalry, wagons, and mule trains. In a few days a courier arrived with the bad news that all the able-bodied men had left the Red Cloud Agency to join

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Red Cloud, the great Sioux chief

the hostiles. He had good news, too: one hundred and twenty Shoshones were on their way to join him.

On June 9 Crook reached the Tongue River in the southeastern corner of Montana. Crazy Horse attacked, but it was only a symbolic effort because he had sent word to Crook he would attack the Tongue if Crook "invaded" that far. Soon the Shoshonis arrived at the camp and came in with a spectacular display of precision light-cavalry maneuvers. The Crows arrived, and on June 16 Crook made his move.

Although he was worried because he had not heard from two other columns under Generals Alfred Terry and John Gibbon, he started on a quick move up to the Rosebud River, where Crazy Horse was reported to be with a large force. Everything not absolutely necessary was left in camp and the men—all cavalry—carried four days' rations. The next day they were at the Rosebud and Crazy Horse with fifteen hundred men attacked Crook's advance party. He may have been hoping to lure Crook into a canyon for a massacre. But Crook was masterful as he handled his greatly outnumbered forces. He stopped thrusts and deployed his units so skillfully that Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull, even with their greatly superior numbers, finally called off the attack. There had been much hand-to-hand fighting and Crook had his horse shot from under him. He had fifty-seven dead and wounded.

Crook had to wait for supplies, hoping for word from Terry and Gibbon—he needed them. A courier came in and included in his information was the fact that Rutherford Hayes had been nominated for president by the Republicans. Hayes had been with Crook in the Civil War and Crook said he was "as brave a man as ever wore a shoulder strap."

On July 11, Washakie, the most important of all Shoshoni chiefs, arrived with 213 more warriors. General Sheridan sent word for Crook to wait for the reinforcements he had dispatched under General Wesley Merritt, then go after the hostiles again. Washakie agreed, telling Crook that Sitting Bull would soon have to disperse his great force in order to get food. Also, he said, the Sioux

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A Crow Indian

would start quarreling over the plunder and many of them would want to go see their families.

On July 10, Crook had received a message from Sheridan telling what happened to one of Terry's columns, the one under George Custer, at the Little Big Horn River. Crook and his men were stunned into silence. Two days later a message arrived from Terry with the same terrible news. That night the Sioux attacked and set grass fires in an attempt to burn out the camp.

Merritt arrived and Crook started out to find Crazy

Washakie, Shoshone chief

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION NATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARCHIVES, NEG. NO. 42021

Horse and Sitting Bull. It rained for twenty-two consecutive days. Supplies grew scarce and everyone was on half-rations, then on one-third rations. Soon they were eating the meat of horses that could not stand the rigors of the horrible march through storms and mud. And General Crook's mess was even less well supplied than that of anyone else. All he had was stewed horse meat with an occasional treat of wild onions. But the search went on.

Finally, on the morning of September 9 a courier brought word that the advance party had found and attacked a Sioux encampment of thirty-seven lodges near Slim Buttes. The Indians had been driven up into the buttes, but help was needed immediately. Crook arrived and found great quantities of dried meat, ammunition, blankets, pots, pans, and many articles that had been taken from the dead of Custer's Seventh Cavalry. Crook tried to convince the hostiles to surrender, but they had sent a message to Crazy Horse and expected him soon. Some women and children were cut off in a ravine and Crook told them to come inside his lines, that they would be well treated. Many of them came with wailing bewildered children, and Crook found out the village was that of Roman Nose, American Horse, and Iron Shield. Twenty-eight warriors came in later and the wounded were cared for. Then the soldiers ate their first decent meal in nearly a month—the Indians' meat. Crook ordered everything useful to be taken and then the lodges were burned.

The next day Crazy Horse arrived and surrounded Crook's forces. He attacked but was driven off, and finally left the scene. Crook allowed the women and children to go back to their men, telling them he did not make war on women and children. He told them their warriors should go back to the reservations and stop exposing their families to the horror of war. Tell the men, he said, that he would not stop until all hostiles were back at the agencies or dead.

Then he marched again, still looking for the decisive battle. Crazy Horse attacked, but his force was smaller now, and he was driven off again. Supply wagons came in and the troopers were happy, especially since it had finally stopped raining.

A message arrived from Sheridan. Crook was to return to the agencies. Many Indians were starting to come in and Crook was to be in charge to make certain he took all their guns so they couldn't go on the warpath again in the spring. The campaign had achieved its purpose. The great army Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull had commanded was broken up.

That winter Crook set out on another campaign. There were still many hostiles who had not come in to the agencies, and winter was the best time to find and destroy a large band. In November he surprised a large encampment of two hundred lodges of the great Cheyenne chief, Dull Knife. Just before the battle ended Dull Knife called out to Crook's many Cheyenne scouts, "Go home—you have no business here; we can whip the white soldiers, but we can't fight you, too." Crook destroyed the village and its supplies desperately needed for war. Dull Knife and many warriors escaped and went to Crazy Horse for help. Crazy Horse refused, and the Cheyenne swore vengeance. They began coming in to the reservations in great numbers, offering their services to fight the Sioux under Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull. The word spread and soon Utes, Arapahos, Bannocks, Shoshonis, Crows, and Winnebagos wanted to fight the Sioux.

The great Spotted Tail went out to persuade Crazy Horse that further fighting was futile; the Indians would be destroyed by more fighting. Crazy Horse appeared at the Red Cloud Agency in May 1877 with eleven hundred people and turned over all equipment for war, even his great war bonnet. There was never another real battle on the northern plains, although unscrupulous whites sometimes managed to sell liquor to small groups of warriors who then broke off the reservations. Even when Crazy Horse took about two thousand people and fled to the north, hoping to return to the old wild life, there was no great battle. Crook held a council and told the Indians they must themselves arrest Crazy Horse to keep the peace. Four hundred warriors went after him. He was killed when he tried to resist arrest. His friend Chief Touch the Clouds said, "It is good; he has looked for death and it has come."

His military conquest completed, Crook once again worked diligently to obtain for the Indians at least what they were supposed to have, constantly fighting the dishonest white contractors and Indian agents and sometimes having to stop breakouts of hungry, cheated Indians. He kept the plains under control until the summer of 1882. Then he received orders to return to the command of the Department of Arizona. The Apaches were on the warpath again.

They had been dealt with so disonestly and so shamelessly that various chiefs had been fighting for a period of years. Victorio had baffled all attempts to capture him and his band for three years. Two hundred people had died as he swept through the white settlements. Nana, with forty warriors, had made fools of one thousand troops and a posse of four hundred. Loco was raiding and murdering. Nan-tia-tish had killed many whites and destroyed thousands of dollars' worth of property.

Crook arrived early in September and was in the saddle the next day. On the Fort Apache reservation he saw only women, children, and some old men; all the young and able were in the hills. He sent word that he was coming out alone to see them and hear what they had to say. Before he left he held council with Alchise, Pedro, and others still on the reservation. The aged Alchise said,

> When you left there were no bad Indians out. We were all content; everything was peace. The officers you had here were all taken away, and new ones came in—a different kind. The good ones must have all been taken away and the bad ones sent in their places.

Old Pedro said,

> When you were here, whenever you said a thing we knew that it was true, and we kept it in our minds. . . . I used to be happy; now I am all the time thinking and crying . . . where [are] those other good officers . . . where have they gone? Why don't they come back? And the young men all say the same thing.

The chiefs said the Apaches were making their own living, that the agent never gave them anything. They did not mind that, but then they were told they would have to leave their own land and go to San Carlos. When Alchise tried to persuade the younger men to keep the peace and go to San Carlos the army threw him in the guardhouse, along with others trying to keep peace.

The Indian Ring had been working successfully again, in collaboration with some unsavory Indian agents. They had confiscated Indian cattle and pony herds, and they had destroyed Indian crops. They still played their old game of making the Apaches go on the warpath so they could sell supplies and rations to the large army that the government would then have to station in Arizona.

Crook went into the mountains and heard the same story from the chiefs out there. He promised to bring an end to all the stealing and mistreatment. The Apaches in the hills, except for the Chiricahuas, came back to the reservations and Crook went to work. He expelled all white miners and settlers from Indian lands. He put honest, efficient, and sympathetic officers in charge and again hired Indians as scouts and police. Apache juries once more tried Apache wrongdoers. Tribes and bands no longer were rewarded or punished—individuals were responsible for themselves.

While he was doing all these things Crook was also preparing for the Chiricahua explosion he knew would come. It came in March 1883. Chato led twenty-six warriors out of a Chiricahua stronghold in Mexico, and left a trail of blood and fire. Crook put together a force of 193 Apaches and a small company of cavalry, and probed two hundred miles into Mexico up into the most rugged part of the Sierra Madres. In a surprise attack he captured all the Chiricahuas, six hundred of them, and brought them back to the reservation and put them to work.

Now the Indian Ring went to work in earnest. Crook was ruining their whole operation. Wild stories were spread and even printed in the newspapers about Indian atrocities—murder, arson, and rape. But for two years there was not a single case of murder or even assault involving an

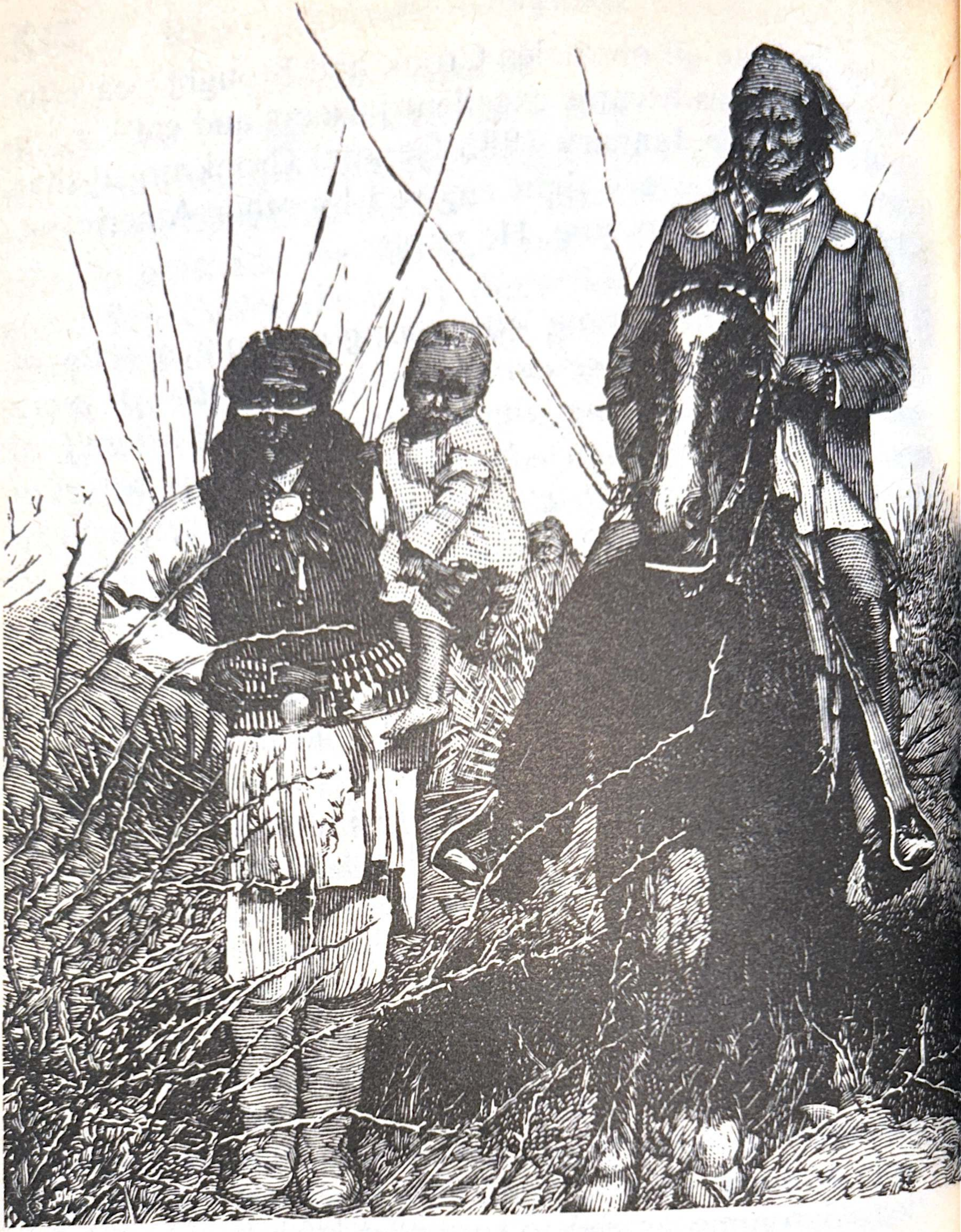
Apache. Despite all obstacles Crook had brought peace to Arizona. Apaches became excellent farmers and cattlemen, and in a letter in January 1885 General Crook urged that Indians be given every right enjoyed by other Americans, including the right to vote. He wrote:

> *If our aim be to remove the aborigine from a state of servile independence, we cannot begin in a better or more practical way than by making him think well of himself, to force upon him the knowledge that he is part and parcel of the nation, clothed with all its political privileges, entitled to share in all its benefits. Our present treatment degrades him in his own eyes. . . .*

Unfortunately, in May 1885 Geronimo and Natchez indulged in a prolonged tiswin drunk and then broke away from the reservation with 124 Chiricahuas, including women and children. Crook asked for two hundred men to help capture them. Every able-bodied man volunteered and it was hard to choose which could go. Geronimo and Natchez headed for Mexico, killing and burning as they went. Crook went after them and pursuit lasted until March, with Chato leading the scouts. They badgered and hounded their quarry until Geronimo finally sent word that he would talk. Crook talked to him very bluntly, telling him he would be punished—he would be imprisoned for two years and then would be allowed to return to his reservation. Geronimo agreed to surrender himself and his band.

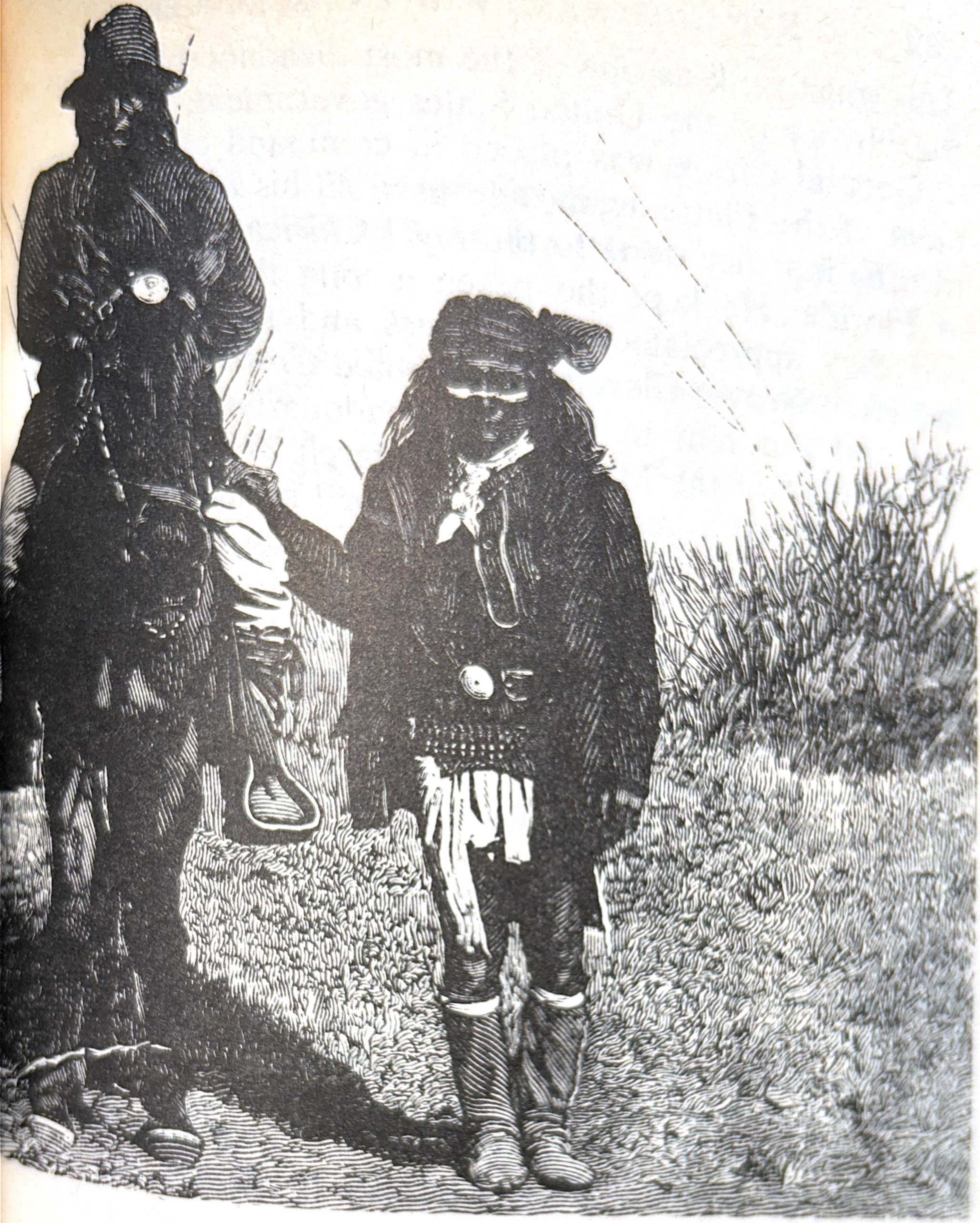
Once more, however, the avarice of a white man brought great trouble. A man went to Geronimo's rancheria, a few miles from where he was supposed to surrender the next day, and sold him and some of his warriors several gallons of whiskey. They became wildly drunk and about sixty of them took off again. Natchez and eighty others surrendered.

General Sheridan did not understand how Chiricahuas operated, how they simply would have dissolved among the rocks if Crook had tried to surround them that night of the drunk, and he criticized Crook. Crook tried to explain his procedure, but Sheridan ordered Crook to stop the of-



Geronimo (left) and Natchez

fensive war and go on the defensive to protect Arizona citizens. Crook explained why that wouldn't be effective and finally ended a telegram to Sheridan with this statement: "It may be that I am too much wedded to my own views in this matter, and as I have spent nearly eight years of the hardest work of my life in this department, I respectfully request that I may now be relieved from its command." His request was granted.



"HARPER'S WEEKLY," APRIL 24, 1886

Geronimo was captured a few months later and sent to prison in Florida. The Government had refused to honor Crook's promise to return Geronimo and his band to their reservation. He remained imprisoned until 1894, when he and the remaining Chiricahuas were taken to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where he died in 1909. However, Chato and a large group of Apache scouts were also imprisoned with him—some of them had given years of service to the army.

This must rank as one of the most dishonorable actions in the history of the United States government.

General Crook was placed in command of the Department of the Platte again, and used all his influence to rectify the injustice done to the loyal Chiricahuas imprisoned in Florida. He kept the peace among the plains Indians and they appreciated his fairness and honesty. In 1888 President Grover Cleveland promoted Crook to major general and put him in Chicago, headquarters of the huge Department of the Missouri. On March 21, 1890, George Crook suffered a heart attack and died immediately.

Thousands of people were grief-stricken and sent condolence telegrams to Crook's wife. When the message of his death reached the Camp Apache reservation the scouts who had served him formed a huge circle, bent their heads, and cried like children. Red Cloud, the Sioux chief, said, "Then General Crook came; he, at least, never lied to us. His words gave the people hope. He died. Their hope died again. Despair came again."

An officer who had served with George Crook for twenty-six years wrote that he was "the tenderest, gentlest, most just and most unselfish man I ever knew. . . . He was the greatest Indian fighter of the country, but he was never an Indian hater. He was the Indians' friend."

Whether George Crook was the greatest Indian fighter can be disputed. Whether he was a great friend and benefactor of the Indian can be disputed. It should be remembered, though, that he was one of the first among the western army officers to recognize that placing Indians on reservations and leaving their future in the hands of often incompetent or dishonest Indian agents would be entirely unacceptable. He respected Indians as vanquished, valiant foes, who had to be treated as human beings and helped in their period of great need.

George Crook
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PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD ERDOES

"A great bull buffalo came slowly toward the small hunting camp."

Chapter 9

SITTING BULL

Warrior-Statesman

SITTING BULL was twenty-six years old and he had been a Sioux warrior for twelve years. The band needed more horses. The decision was to get them from the Crows. A raid on the Crows was always an exciting and dangerous challenge because they were fine fighters. The men prepared themselves by painting their bodies, making medicine, and dancing; then they rode around the camp in great pageantry, and headed for Crow country.

Raiding for horses was an exhilarating sport that could bring wealth and prestige or shame and humiliation, even injury and death. Sitting Bull, like the others, was ready. They reached the Crow camp at night, as planned. They quietly took as many horses as they thought they could drive rapidly and were on their way. At dawn the Crows discovered their loss and a war party quickly set off on the trail of the marauders. The Sioux were greatly slowed by having to herd their new horses and the Crows were bearing down so rapidly the Sioux stopped and formed a battle line to protect the herd.

They looked so formidable that most of the Crows slowed up to think about the situation. Three brave ones kept riding hard. Sitting Bull quickly chose one of them and rode out to meet him. He brought his horse to an abrupt stop, jumped off, and ran as fast as he could toward the charging Crow. The Crow also left his horse and ran forward. Sitting Bull could see he was a chief. Suddenly, the chief stopped running and brought his rifle to his shoulder. Sitting Bull stopped, knelt on one knee, aimed and fired. The Crow shot first. The ball hit Sitting Bull's shield, ricocheted into his foot and plowed through the length of it. The Crow was mortally wounded, and Sitting Bull sprang forward, drew his knife, and plunged it into the brave chief's heart. The rest of the Crows decided it was not going to be their day and they retreated. Sitting Bull's valor had saved the horses and stopped what would have been a costly battle.

Other deeds of courage had already earned him membership in the elite warrior society called the Strong Hearts. Now he was taken into the most prestigious group of all, the Midnight Strong Hearts, and they immediately elected him to be their leader. The injury to his foot was serious, and it caused him to walk with a small limp the rest of his life.

Although being leader of the Midnight Strong Hearts was the highest honor, it carried the greatest responsibility. With that office came the duty of directing the tribe's hunting. Hunger or abundance hung on the wisdom of Sitting Bull's decisions and on how he directed the hunts.

It was his belief that his Hunkpapa Sioux were running out of game. The buffalo herds had decreased alarmingly. His recommendation was to acquire more hunting lands. It meant wars—wars of conquest. The Hunkpapas were ready to follow his leadership. He led them against the Crows, the Rees, the Mandans, the Shoshonis, the Hidatsas and the Hohes. He was a great war leader and the Sioux were great warriors. One by one the other tribes abandoned traditional hunting grounds to the unstoppable Sioux, until the Sioux were the greatest, most powerful of all the plains Indians. No tribe could stand up to them. Only the whites would defeat them.

The thousands and thousands of white men were always encroaching, driving away the game, putting up fences and ruining the prairies with their ploughs. The Sioux hated no other white man as he hated the farmer. Wherever the farmer went he destroyed the hunting by tearing up the great grasslands and putting up horrible fences. The Sioux resented the miner's trespassing, but at least he was a transient. The Sioux did not like, but respected, the white soldier, who only temporarily ruined the hunting. But the only good farmer, to a Sioux, was a dead farmer.

The whites did not overwhelm the Sioux until the late 1870s and actually did not "tame" them *all* until Sitting Bull finally became the last Sioux chief to give up the wild nomadic life in 1881.

The Sioux life had been one that brought great happiness to them. True, it was a warrior society, with danger and death, and constant lack of security. But the Sioux had been highly successful in war for nearly a hundred years. The vastness of their hunting grounds provided an excellent standard of living as well as a variety of living: on the plains, in the timber, in the bottom lands, and on the mountains. Permanence of a home was not desired by them. They were highly nomadic, going where the buffalo went. All their possessions were portable. They did not even make clay pots, which would be too breakable when traveling. They put water in skins and dropped hot stones in to heat it for cooking.

They strived to live with four virtues as their guidelines: bravery, fortitude, generosity, and wisdom. The "best" families came closest to attaining them, and to being wealthy in the number of horses owned, and to achieving success in hunting. Those families or individuals who tried but did not achieve were looked after by those who were successful. Generosity was almost a fetish. The Sioux were always giving to those in their tribe who did not have. The greatest leaders were not simply great warriors or hunters, but those who came closest to achieving the four virtues—with emphasis on generosity. A young warrior who had ambitions had to give away quantities of horses and food; then if he exhibited bravery, fortitude, and wisdom people would follow him, be a part of his band. Sitting Bull was one of the most generous of all the Sioux. Later in life when he toured some of the white man's cities he marveled at how many abjectly poor people there were and frequently gave money to those he saw. He said, "The white man knows how to make everything, but he does not know how to distribute it."

Sitting Bull not only exhibited the four virtues, but he came from a "good" family—one with *status,* which made his path somewhat less difficult. He was born in March 1831 on the Grand River, near what is now the site of Bullhead, South Dakota. His father's name was Returns Again, and Sitting Bull was the only son. Much was expected of the sons of "good" families, but much was given to them and to all children. Children were loved in the Sioux families and physical punishment was virtually never used.

The life of small boys was especially idyllic. They had few responsibilities and spent their days in playing games and participating in sports. Sitting Bull apparently lived the typical boy's life. His name, until he was fourteen years old, was Slow because he was very deliberate in all his actions. Slow lived the life of other Sioux boys, playing winter games like ice sliding for distance, to win a small prize like a top if he slid farther than the others. He used buffalo ribs as a sled, and spun tops in attempts to get them to spin into holes made in the ice. He played the fire-throwing game, which involved teams of boys hitting each other with flaming sticks, and he was on teams playing throw-at-each-other-with-mud, which was not dangerous, but the mud balls stung when propelled with short springy sticks. The roughest game he played was the swing-kicking game which began with someone on one of two teams shouting, "Shall we grab them by the hair and knee them in the face until they bleed?" Then the boys on both teams attempted to do exactly what the questioner proposed. It was a bloody, rough game and was obviously a conditioner for the life of a warrior.

Slow, like the other boys, was given his first horse as soon as he was able to straddle it. He learned all there was to know about a horse as well as how to ride it, and, as soon as he was able, he began practicing the difficult art of riding on the side of the pony using it as a shield from an enemy's arrows. He learned to shoot while riding fast. And he and other boys went hunting for rabbits and other small game, supplementing their families' food supply and giving the boys a feeling of contributing to the families' needs. When Slow was fourteen he wanted desperately to go with a war party as a real warrior. He had seen the men come back with wounds, had seen the bodies of those killed in battle. He'd seen the women wail in grief. But he'd also seen the war dances, victory dances, the pantomimes of battle with ambushes, charges, and hand-to-hand fighting. He felt he was ready, and when his father announced he was going on a war party, Slow decided to go. His father said nothing to Slow to demonstrate acceptance of his going, but handed him a coupstick and then said simply, "Try to do something brave."

The coupstick was an essential article of war. It was not a weapon, but how a warrior used it, or if he used it, could make him a success in his society or relegate him to a life of obscurity. The coupstick was used to count coups on an enemy, which was far more daring than to kill him. Actually, counting coups was the bravest act a Sioux could perform. He had to strike his enemy with his hand or his stick and get away alive, *and* he'd better have a witness. All the plains Indians played the coup game and no one wanted to be a victim—it was a disgrace. Among the Sioux no man could sit in the tribal councils if he did not have at least one coup to his credit, nor could he take any part in tribal ceremonies. He couldn't even name his child.

Slow, at fourteen, was determined to count coups on his first war expedition. He would be a man quickly, or he'd be dead; this was not a game for weaklings of body or spirit. He was ready. The enemy war party approached the ambush. Suddenly, Slow heeled his fast little gray and was the first Hunkpapa to attack. The enemy party, greatly surprised, turned and galloped for safety. Slow's gray was indeed fast and he began to overtake some of the warriors on slower ponies. Soon the enemy on the slowest horse stopped abruptly and dismounted to face his enemy and fight for his life. He drew his bow with an arrow nocked, but Slow charged on. A more experienced warrior would have slid to his horse's side and veered off, but Slow rode furiously straight toward the man, slapped his forearm with his coupstick, and rode the man down with his pony's shoulder, shouting, "On-hey, I, Slow, have conquered him!" Some Hunkpapas coming up fast behind him killed the enemy, others continued on and counted coups and killed some more of the enemy on slower horses.

There were many trophies: scalps, horses, and weapons. They were displayed and talked about when the warriors returned to camp. Slow's father put him on the back of a superb bay war pony. Slow was painted black—victor's black. His father, Returns Again, led the bay around the ceremonial circle several times and then shouted proudly for all to hear, "My son has struck the enemy! He is brave! I dub him Ta-tan-ka I-yo-ta-ke [Sitting Bull]."

That night at the celebration Sitting Bull was *the* hero of the occasion because he had been the first to strike the enemy. And the young hero, like other Sioux, had no false sense of modesty. He was the hero and enjoyed it. He talked about his daring deed, played an important part in his first victory dance, and reveled in it all. He was a man.

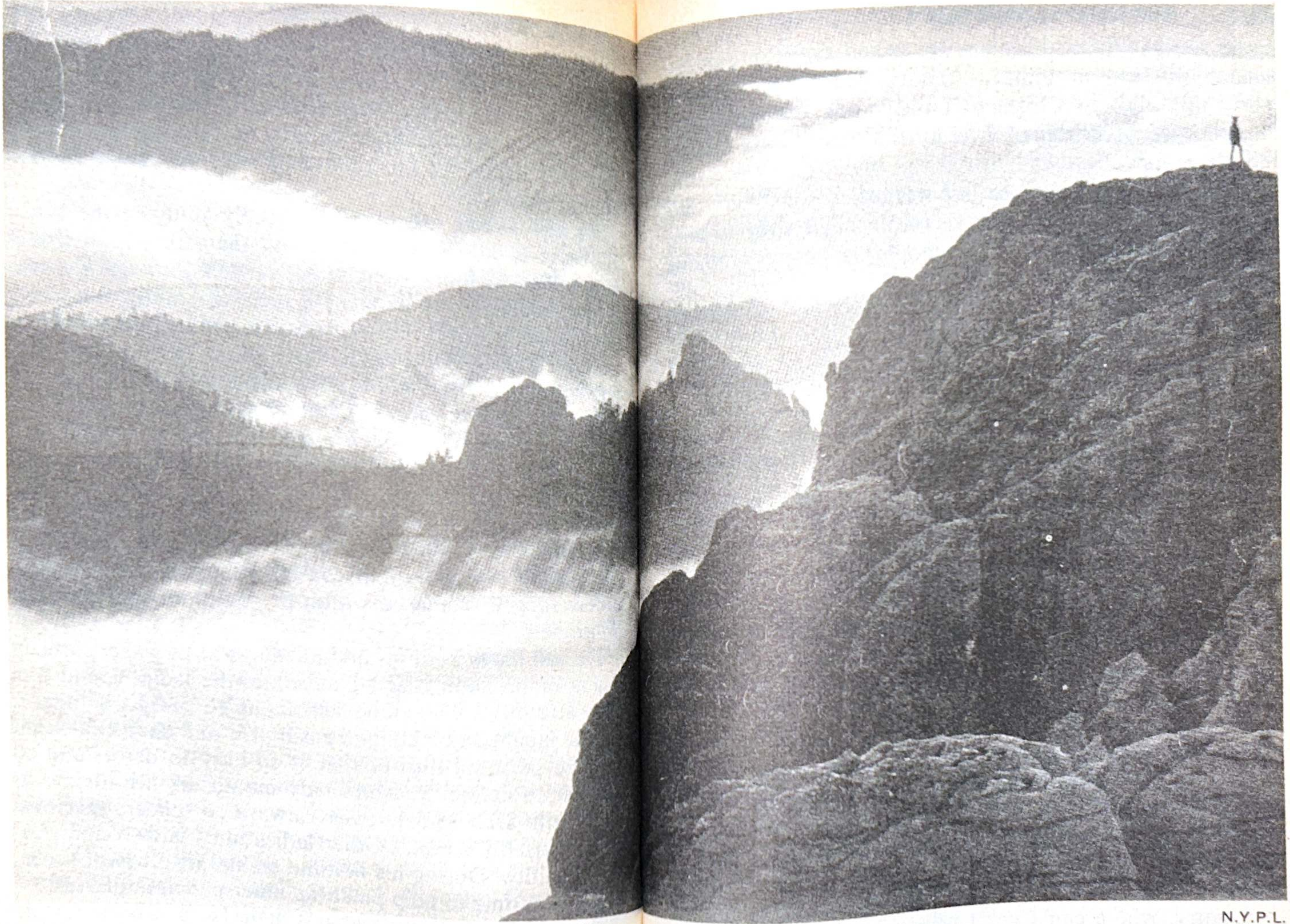
Even as an old man Sitting Bull loved to tell the story of his first coup, though he had countless other exploits to speak about with pride. And he never changed his name. He was a very spiritual man and his name had significant religious connotations. His father told this story about it. One night when he was out on a hunting expedition a great bull buffalo came slowly toward the small hunting camp. The bull was making strange grunting noises and some of the men were afraid, but Returns Again thought the bull was saying something as he walked slowly and moved his huge head from side to side. Finally, Returns Again understood the noises. The bull was saying four names over and over. (Four is the magic number for the Sioux.) All the names had the word Bull as part of them. One of the names, Sitting Bull, Returns Again took for himself, but he was so proud of his son that he gave him his own name.

The new Sitting Bull liked his name very much—liked the religious significance. The Sioux religion was complex and fully understood only by the shamans, holy ones. They passed along the beliefs from generation to generation. Wakan Tanka was the supreme spirit, but he had associate gods and subordinate gods who looked after various aspects of the universe and the people. The Buffalo God was a partner of the Sun God, and among other duties he looked after old people and virgins. He had the great fighting qualities of courage, strength, and endurance. Sitting Bull was happy to be associated with the great Buffalo God, Ta-tan-ka.

He also found happiness in closely studying the birds. He came to know so much about them that it was as if they talked to him. Many times he felt they warned him of the imminence of danger—which, of course, is entirely possible as birds react to the presence of strange people or animals. Sitting Bull studied the songs of the birds and imitated them. Then he began to compose and sing his own songs. This placed him in demand at ceremonials. He had a clear melodious voice, enjoyed singing, and composed many songs to fit particular occasions. His songs have been collected and some of them are still sung today. Because the Sioux people love to sing, Sitting Bull's rise to influence and fame was made easier by his singing and composing. The people especially admired his ability to come up with a new song as some condition or situation made one appropriate.

He had many abilities and talents, and he was a pleasant young man. Though not handsome, the ladies found him very attractive. His smile accompanied his good humor, and he laughed quickly and easily. He had charisma—that magical personal quality that is so easy to detect and so difficult to define. A white lady missionary who came to know him well said he was "always so tender, gracious, and invariably sweet." Other ladies must have found similar qualities. During his lifetime he had nine wives; yet he still found time to help patch up other peoples' quarrels.

And Sitting Bull was a man's man. He had to be for his fellow warriors to elevate him to leadership of the Midnight Strong Hearts when he was twenty-six years old, in 1857. By that year Sitting Bull had already decided there could be no compromise with the whites. The whites would have to stay out of Sioux territory or the Sioux would soon be subjugated. There was no middle course. He would not—and never did—go outside of Sioux boun-



N.Y.P.L.

The rough peaks of the Black Hills rising above a sea of clouds. The dark appearance of these highlands from the Plains gave them their name.

daries to fight the white man. He asked one thing of the whites: stay out of Indian territory. He never signed a treaty that allowed whites to build roads through Sioux land, and he never signed a treaty that sold Sioux land to the white man.

Visions were of supreme importance to the Sioux. Sitting Bull had one, and in his vision an eagle sang to him, and he sang the words to his people as he went among them:

My father has given me this nation;
In protecting them I have a hard time.

He believed the supreme spirit had given him the job of protecting his people, and he meant to do it to the best of his ability.

He was already recognized as being more than just a bold and dashing warrior and a great hunter. Politically wise, he saw through the schemes of the white treaty makers when others did not. When the army sent a survey party into the Black Hills—Sioux land, even acknowledged by treaty—the Sioux found the surveyors and ordered them out. Sitting Bull was there and made his first speech of which we have a record:

> Friends, the Black Hills belong to me! Looks at me and look at the earth. Which is the older, do you think? The earth, and I was born on it. . . . It does not belong to us alone; it was our fathers' and should be our children's after us. When I received it, it was all in one piece, and so I hold it. If the white men take my country, where can I go? I have nowhere to go. . . . I love it very much. Let us alone. That is what they promised in their treaty. . . . What is this white man doing here? . . . To spy out the land . . . to find a good place for a fort and a road, and to dig out gold. . . . Friends, the Black Hills belong to me. This white man must stop here. He must go back.

That surveying party turned back. Some of the Sioux had been tempted to allow them to carry out their mission, but Sitting Bull had shown them what the white man really wanted to do. The whites did not put anything over on Sitting Bull. He had previously commented on the dishonesty of many Indian Bureau agents: "I would have more confidence in the Grandfather at Washington if he did not have so many bald-headed thieves working for him." And as he observed the fluctuating and frustrating policies as the Indian Bureau and the army fought each other about how to handle Indians he said, "The white men have too many chiefs."

In 1862, some Santee Sioux living east of the Missouri River, in Minnesota, rose up to redress their grievances: game scattered by whites, cheated by dishonest traders, their way of life destroyed. There was a widespread massacring of whites which was finally put down by troops under Colonel Henry Sibley. Fifteen hundred Sioux were imprisoned, 392 were tried by court-martial, 307 were sentenced to be hanged. But President Abraham Lincoln commuted all the sentences except for thirty-nine.

Many of the Santees fled west to where they could still live like Sioux. An army followed them in the summer of 1864, commanded by General Alfred Sully. Sully was hunting for any Sioux. Sitting Bull had a camp of several hundred tepees and when his scouts brought word that a large army was approaching he had to find out if Sully came in peace. Long Dog rode at a gallop along the long line of blue-coated soldiers. They shot at Long Dog, and the Indians knew Sully came to make war, but they had no idea why. None of them had made war against the whites, except the Santees, who had seen their men tried by white men and executed for their crimes.

The Sioux were not well situated for war that day and eventually retreated hurriedly, losing most of their food supplies, buffalo robes, and deer skin. The Sioux sent out a man bearing a white flag. Sully would not talk. Sully marched on and for several days the Sioux harassed his column. One afternoon Sitting Bull trapped some soldiers in a box canyon and during a pause in the fighting he called out, "Why do the white men come to fight with us?" No one answered.

The Sioux ran out of ammunition and rode away. For whatever the reason, the army had virtually set the northern plains on fire. When Sitting Bull received news of the Chivington attack on the Cheyennes at Sand Creek he was resigned to war with the whites, though he had kept away from them for years.

In 1868, when Sitting Bull was thirty-seven, the many divisions of the Sioux people came together in a great council to decide what to do about the white man's incursions on the traditional Sioux lands. They did a thing there that had never been done before: they chose one man to be the war chief over all Sioux in the war against the whites. They chose Sitting Bull.

All the Sioux did not recognize him as their chief, but most of them did. Four Horns made a short speech after the decision had been made. He said:

> Because of your bravery on the battlefield, and your reputation as the bravest warrior in all our bands, we have elected you head chief of the entire Sioux nation, head war chief. It is your duty to see the nation is fed, that we have plenty. When you say "Fight," we shall fight; when you say "Make peace," we shall make peace.

Crazy Horse and his Oglala band were there and Crazy Horse was elected second-in-command. From that time on Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse were close friends. Sitting Bull still did not make war on whites, although he continued the policy of warring against the traditional Sioux enemies for more hunting lands. When he did talk with whites he demanded four things: 1) close the white man's roads through Sioux territory, 2) burn the forts on Sioux lands, 3) stop the steamboats from bringing in more whites, and 4) expel all whites from Sioux land, except for traders.

In the same year that Sitting Bull was made war chief of all the Sioux the United States government decided to try again for peace on the northern plains. The assistance of Father Pierre-Jean de Smet was enlisted. All the Sioux knew the good father, and that he was brave, strong, and to be trusted. De Smet met with Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, and other chiefs, and because of him the Indians agreed to meet again with the whites, to try again to work out a peace. Sitting Bull would not go to the peace council, but others wanted to try, so he designated the brave Gall to attend for him. The result of the council was the Fort Laramie Treaty.

To the Sioux present it looked good; just about what Sitting Bull had been demanding all along. The Sioux were to have all whites excluded from their land, north of the Platte and west to the Big Horn Mountains. Whites could not even travel through without Sioux permission. The white man's forts there were to be abandoned.

Gall signed, as did some other hostile chiefs. The Sioux were happy about the treaty—until they found out much later that either they had not understood it all, or it had not all been presented to them. The treaty also specified that the Sioux were agreeing to leave their wild nomadic life and settle down to farming, that they were not to oppose the building of railroads through their land and that they were to confine themselves to living in the quite barren region along the Missouri River.

There was, nevertheless, a period of peace on the northern plains, except for intertribal wars, which had always existed. Sitting Bull would still have nothing to do with white men. He would not be compromised. When other chiefs went in to the agencies to accept gifts Sitting Bull would not lower himself to do it, nor would Crazy Horse. When a government commission wanted to come to talk about surveying land for the proposed route of the Northern Pacific Railroad, Sitting Bull's orders were to let them proceed unmolested, but he would not talk to them. No Indian land was for sale. He sent word he was too busy to talk with the commissioners, his tribe was hunting, but he would talk later if he could find an honest white man.

In 1874, when General William Sherman wanted the Black Hills surveyed, Sitting Bull let General Custer come in and do it. Custer's report to the white people of the United States contained very glowing reports of the Hills area: "Nature has done so much to prepare homes for husbandmen and left so little for [them] to do here. . . ." He also said there was "gold in the grassroots." The imagination and greed of whites were whetted for the Indians' sacred Black Hills. The Sioux and the Cheyennes loved those hills as they loved no other area. They occupied it especially in the spring, when it became a place of peace and love. Young men played their flutes and sang and courted young women. Old people basked in the warm sun and remembered their youth. The hunting was easy. Ancestors were buried there. No Indians wanted to sell their beloved hills.

The whites began pouring in. The army kept them out for a while, but soon the army either couldn't or didn't stop the encroachment, and before long there were about 25,000 of them, mostly prospecting for gold. The Grandfather at Washington, now Ulysses Grant, sent a commission to buy the hills. Sitting Bull was again busy in the north with his band, hunting and getting ready for the winter to come. He sent word to the commissioners: "The Black Hills belong to me. If the whites try to take them, I will fight." President Grant decided to get tough. The Sioux bands which had gone on reservations would be willing to sell, but the hostiles were the ones causing trouble, attacking white settlements and farms. Sitting Bull was still up north and had no part in the fighting between whites and hostiles in the hills.

It would not be very long, however, before Sitting Bull would not be left alone to conduct life in the Sioux way. An inspector, in September of 1875, reported to Grant that Sitting Bull and some others were untamable and hostile, that the United States would have to make war against them, and that the Indians always fought independently, so about one thousand troops could conquer them and drive them onto reservations with the "friendlies" already there.

On December 3 an ultimatum was issued to all Sioux not on the reservations. They must move within reservation boundaries by January 31, 1876, or "be deemed hostile and treated accordingly by the military force." Sitting Bull was 240 miles from "his" Standing Rock Agency and there was already much snow, with high drifts, covering the area. He and most of the other hostile chiefs did not even receive the message by January 31. Whether any of them would have brought in their bands if they had received the word is conjectural, but probably Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse would not have paid any attention to it, certainly not in the bitter cold that then gripped the land of the Sioux.

On February 7 Sitting Bull was officially declared hostile and was to be warred upon, though all he was doing was bothering no one and hoping that the white man would live up to the treaty guaranteeing Sioux rights in their own territory.

General George Crook, "Three Stars" to the Sioux, was ordered to go out and bring in Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, and the others. On March 11 Crook set out from Fort Fetterman to carry out his orders. His head scout, Frank Grouard, had been captured years ago by the Hunkpapas and Sitting Bull had adopted him and treated him like his own son, helping Grouard to become an excellent hunter and tracker.

Sitting Bull heard that the white soldiers were coming into Sioux territory and that they were coming shooting. He could not understand why. For eight years, ever since he had talked to Father De Smet and told him he would try not to war against the whites, he had stayed away from the whites, and all he asked was that they let him alone. Now he was to be forced into fighting them, he had no choice.

One of Crook's columns, under General James Reynolds, attacked a Cheyenne village on the Little Powder River. It was an error; those Indians had not even been ordered to come in to the reservation. Reynolds also pulled out when he had victory in his grasp, having only partly destroyed the village. The survivors made their way to Sitting Bull on the Powder River about sixty miles away. He gave them food, clothing, ponies, saddles, blankets, and ammunition. He was enraged. He had been patient and had suffered long and silently; now it was time for action.

He called a council of the chiefs in the area and spoke to them:

> We are an island of Indians in a lake of whites. We must stand together, or they will rub us out separately. These soldiers have come shooting; they want war. All right, we'll give it to them.

He sent messengers to all Sioux, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, even the ones at the agencies. The word they carried was something like this: "It is war. Come to my camp at the Big Bend of the Rosebud. Let's all get together and have one big fight with the soldiers." The young men everywhere were excited. Those at the agencies were tired of days with nothing to do and of always being hungry because there was not enough food for everyone. A war fever swept through the people at the agencies and those in the wild bands. Red Cloud, the great and influential Oglala chief, had been to Washington and talked to the Grandfather. He had seen the powerful military facilities and guns of the whites and he believed war was futile, that many Indians would be killed. He tried to allay the fever but he was an agency Indian and even his own son, Jack Red Cloud, was sick of the white man's treatment and went to join Sitting Bull.

As soon as there was enough grass for the winter-lean ponies, the people started for the Rosebud's Big Bend. Some of them probably went to have another chance to fight the Crows and the Shoshonis again, because they'd heard those old enemies were with the soldiers. Some of the people probably went to join Sitting Bull because they felt they would be safer there. The white man had a bad reputation for punishing friendly Indians when they could not find the hostile ones, often not knowing who was friendly or who was hostile, or perhaps not caring—an Indian was an Indian.

As the bands gathered on the Big Bend it was a very sociable camp. Most of the people were Sioux, although

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A Hunkpapa Sioux Indian

some Cheyennes and Arapahos came. There was much happy singing and dancing. There was feasting and courting and parties. When everyone had arrived Sitting Bull called a council. He was elected director of the whole operation. Two Moons was to command the Cheyennes in battle. Sitting Bull would command the Hunkpapas and Crazy Horse would direct the Oglalas. But they weren't ready for battle yet. They needed good ponies, guns, and ammunition.

There were so many white settlers around that horses would be easy to get. Sitting Bull sent out the young men in parties of three and four. The soldiers would not chase small parties; they had run into too many ambushes that way and besides Crook would save everything for one big smashing attack on a large force. Sitting Bull knew how Three Stars operated.

And Sitting Bull was a changed man that summer of 1876. He was no longer the sweet gentle soul the lady missionary knew. He was a man possessed with hatred toward those who would not leave him and his people alone, who came into his land shooting. He told his young men raiding for ponies and guns, "Spare nobody. If you meet anyone, kill him, and take his horse. Let no one live. Save nothing!" This, from the man who had saved the lives of many captives; who had once issued an edict that all captives either must be taken into a family or set free—no more slaves in his camp.

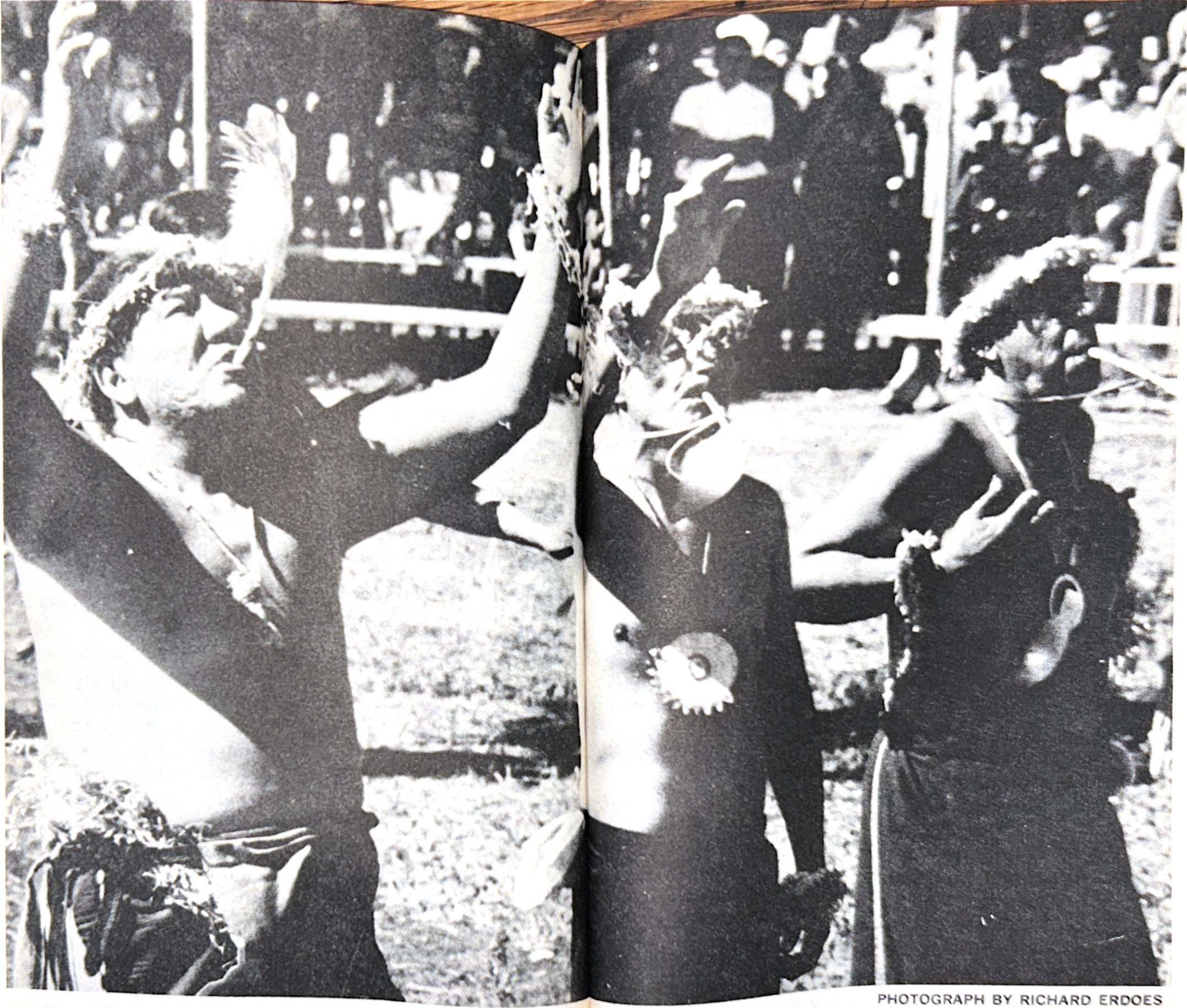
He was leading what he believed to be the greatest nation in the world. It is very likely he was leading the greatest aggregation of light cavalry the world ever saw in one force. And he was determined to lead to victory. He believed it was the last chance for the plains Indians to save their country. Two Moons described Sitting Bull some years later as he was that summer: "He was a mean man. He loved to kill . . . a man and laughed to see him die. . . . Only one thing smelled good to him—gunpowder."

Sitting Bull's small raiding parties found it easy to get horses, but they found it almost impossible to obtain guns, which were expensive. Most of the Indians who had guns had old ones, often thirty or forty years old. Few of them had repeaters, and ammunition was so scarce that they had learned how to save the shells, reload and recap them.

While the young men were out Sitting Bull decided it was time for him to commune with his spiritual world. Alone he climbed a hill. He promised to do the Sun Dance for two days and nights if the coming battle were successful. He felt that he received assurance of success, so he set the day for the Sun Dance to begin. He and his people were well aware of what this meant. It entailed great pain and endurance, but out of it would come an important vision to guide them. Sitting Bull had long had a reputation for being granted significant and prophetic visions.

The Sun Dance took many days, included many participants, involved a number of very complicated rites, and usually was held only once a year—during the moon of ripening chokecherries. On the last day Sitting Bull played a great self-sacrificing role. He sat down with his back against a sacred tree and began a religious wail. Jumping Bull came to him, carrying razor-sharp instruments to perform the flesh-removing rite. He took fifty pieces of flesh from each arm. During the half hour that Jumping Bull operated and the blood flowed down Sitting Bull's arms, he gave no evidence of the exquisite pain he endured, he just continued the wailing. When the one-hundredth piece had been removed Sitting Bull arose, blood dripping from his fingers, and slowly began to perform the dance. He danced all the rest of the day and all night. At noon the next day it appeared that he was about to faint from loss of blood and the rigors of the dance. Some men with the right to do so led him to the sacred lodge, laid him down, and he lapsed into unconsciousness.

When he revived he described his vision. A voice had come from above saying, "I give you these because they have no ears." "These" were many soldiers and a few Indians on horseback falling into the Sioux camp—heads down. When the people heard what Sitting Bull had envisioned, they rejoiced. It meant that soldiers—with their



PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD ERDOES

Modern-day Sioux performing the Sun Dance

Indian allies—who would not listen to the reasonable Sioux demands about being left alone and who made war without cause would fall victim in battle.

Not long after, some Cheyenne hunters came galloping into camp with the exciting news that General Crook was some twenty miles away, the valley was black with soldiers. The warriors began to paint themselves and, finally, after darkness had fallen they mounted, paraded through camp, and went to meet Three Stars. Crazy Horse led his Oglalas and Sitting Bull commanded the Hunkpapas.

About the middle of the morning scouting parties of the two opposing forces happened to come upon each other and the Battle of the Rosebud began. Crook was surprised; he didn't know how wrought up the hostiles were. This battle was not the hit-and-run kind of fighting he had come to expect from Indians. They weren't playing the game of counting coup; they had come to destroy. Crook deployed his forces wisely. There were charges and countercharges and more vicious hand-to-hand fighting than the whites had experienced before. The Sioux displayed their great cavalry technique. The warriors rode on the sides of their ponies, shooting rifles and arrows from underneath the ponies' necks—giving the soldiers nothing to shoot at in return. Lances, knives, tomahawks, all wielded with fury and skill, drove the whites into defensive positions from which the Indians could not dislodge them. Finally, for whatever reason, the Indians rode in a great circle around Crook's position and left for the day. They may have been running low on ammunition or may have decided they had accomplished their purpose.

Sitting Bull has been criticized for not leading any charges that day, as Crazy Horse did. Some writers have suggested he was a coward, or really just a medicine man. But Sitting Bull was there, directing and inspiring the Hunkpapas, although too weak from his Sun Dance ordeal to lead charges.

Three Stars reported that his men drove the hostiles from the field of action, but he needed reinforcements and retreated to wait for them. When he received a message from Sheridan to pursue and hit the Indians again he wondered out loud if Sheridan could surround three Sioux warriors with one soldier. No one in the army had seen so many Indians fighting together before. This was a new Indian warrior, in greater numbers than the army thought possible. Sitting Bull had brought them together.

But Sitting Bull's vision had not yet been fulfilled. True, the Indians had fought Three Stars and were convinced they had won a victory. The vision had predicted victims falling into their camp, though, and the Indians had traveled twenty miles for the battle with Crook. The vision had yet to come true.

Sitting Bull moved his great allied camp now—looking for more plentiful game. The new camp would be on the Little Big Horn River where the grass would make the ponies fat and strong. The moving cavalcade was so long that the Cheyenne contingent in the lead had set up their tepees and already cooked their meal before the Hunkpapas in the rear had arrived. The new camp stretched along the river for three miles, with about two thousand tepees. The people rested and waited for the soldiers that Sitting Bull's vision had promised them. The ill-fated Seventh Cavalry was on its way, General George A. Custer commanding.

Much has been written about the "Custer Massacre," and many theories have been proposed about why Custer took the actions he did on June 25, 1876. He did, apparently, disobey or at least go beyond his orders. Whether he did so in an effort to recapture his former glory as the "boy general" of the Civil War, or because he thought a great victory would elevate him to the presidency, or just because it seemed to be the best course of action, no one will ever know now. Apparently he could not believe it when his scouts told him how many Indians were in the camp they had discovered. Possibly no one but Crook would have believed that then, and there had been no communication between Crook and Custer. Neither knew where the other one was.

Custer decided to follow a plan that he had used suc-

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General George A. Custer

cessfully before: divide his Seventh into forces and hit the Indians from three sides. He must have counted on the element of surprise. This plan had worked beautifully eight years before when he had smashed the Cheyennes on the Washita. Major Marcus Reno was to hit the south end of the encampment. That is where Sitting Bull's Hunkpapas were.

Sitting Bull did not know Custer was near until shortly before Reno appeared—shooting. Fat Bear brought him the word. The Hunkpapas were not ones to panic. Some of them caught their grazing horses. Others formed a defensive line to protect the fleeing women and children. The mounted warriors rode out to fight the attackers. Reno stopped his charging troopers and ordered them to dismount and fight. The Hunkpapas now knew their women and children were safe and went out to the attack. They flanked Reno and went to his rear, forcing him to move into some timber. The Sioux pressed him hard and he retreated under heavy attack to some bluffs across the river. The Sioux charged after him and it was just like a buffalo hunt for them. Reno lost half his men but he achieved the bluffs.

Sitting Bull was not leading charges. He was in command and he was trying to figure out what the soldiers' plan of action was. He couldn't believe Reno was alone. He foresaw a second force—under Captain Frederick Benteen—and he guessed a third force—Custer's. Benteen eventually joined Reno on the bluffs, and Sitting Bull quickly had his forces attacking Custer's troops as soon as he heard firing in that direction, leaving only a few to pin Reno on the bluffs.

Custer's advance had been stopped as he tried to ford the river to attack the village. As the Sioux swung their furious fighters away from Reno and rode to attack Custer, Custer saw he was greatly outnumbered and retreated up a hill. It was the same hill to which, the night before, Sitting Bull had gone alone to pray for the success of his warriors in the battle to come and to pray for their safety. But Custer found no solace on that hill. The Indians were relentless, and Custer's soldiers fell all around him. No one knows how Custer died, and several Indians have been named, with "proof" for each, as the one who killed him. One of the reasons for the confusion is that most of the Sioux had no idea what he looked like or even that he was there, until later.

After destroying Custer's little band of brave soldiers the Sioux went back to attack Reno again. Many of them now were armed with the new guns and the ammunition they had taken from Custer's dead and they poured deadly fire into Reno's position until dark. The next morning they went back to the attack but Reno held his position all day despite his great losses. Before sunset, it is said, Sitting Bull called off the attack and told his warriors: "That's enough, let them go. Let them live. . . . They came against us, and we have killed a few. If we kill them all, they will send a bigger army against us."

Sitting Bull had ordered the Hunkpapas not to touch the bodies, clothing, or equipment of the dead troopers. But the other Indians were under no such orders and the bodies were scalped and mutilated and all their possessions were taken. Later, when other soldiers found these trophies of war in the camp of Indians they were inspired even more to avenge the "Gallant Seventh," just as Sitting Bull had foreseen.

The day after Sitting Bull had saved Reno's troops the great allied encampment was dispersing. The women were taking down the tepees and packing their travois for travel. Sitting Bull's vision had been fulfilled. The soldiers "without ears" had fallen into the camp and been destroyed. Two hundred and six white soldiers who came shooting never left the battlefield. The battle on the Little Big Horn marked the high tide of the Sioux struggle to hold their land.

Sitting Bull knew, as did Three Stars and the other generals, that thousands of Sioux could not stay together for very long. There just was not enough game in any one area to feed that many. Some of the Sioux from the agencies had joined with Sitting Bull to hunt buffalo, since there was never enough food at most agencies. These Indians started back toward the reservations, hunting as they traveled, under the leadership of American Horse and Black Shield. General Crook found them and the battle at Slim Buttes took place. Word was sent to Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse, but with their greatly depleted war force they could not accomplish anything against Crook, who by then had two thousand troops. American Horse died in that battle, stoically, with his blanket wrapped tightly around a gaping wound in his abdomen while he clamped his teeth on a small piece of wood.

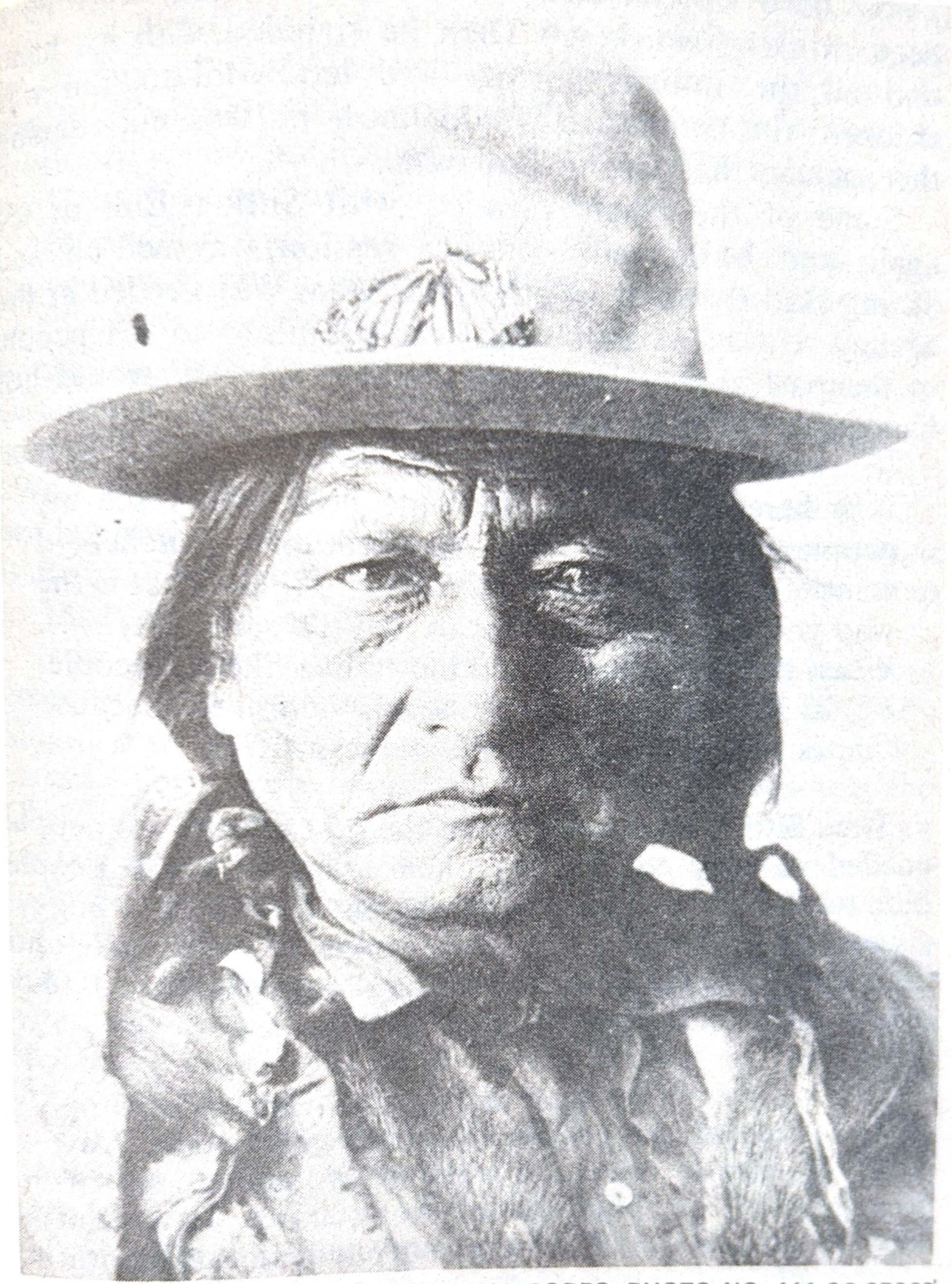
Most of the small bands were now either found by the army, defeated and sent back to the agencies, or they went to them voluntarily. Sitting Bull continued to hunt and prepare for winter as the Sioux had always done before the white invasion. The whites back in the east, however, were terribly shaken by the Custer debacle and they demanded more troops be sent to Sioux country to tame those still "wild." No one, at least no one in authority, apparently gave serious thought as to why the Sioux fought or why the whites thought they had to take Sioux land guaranteed to the Indians by treaties. More and more troops excellently equipped and well-officered arrived in Sioux country.

Colonel Nelson Miles, so "successful" in taming the southern plains Indians in 1874, arrived. He found Sitting Bull and parleyed with him several times. Sitting Bull told Miles he was not looking for trouble with whites, that he just wanted to be left alone. Some of the Hunkpapas decided it was useless to resist any longer and went to the agencies. While this was going on Congress passed a law, in August 1876, providing that no food would be given to the agency Sioux until they agreed to give up the Powder River country and the Black Hills. Hunger eventually forced the chiefs to sign the agreement, but Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse went about their hunting—staying clear of the white soldiers—on their own land.

Finally Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse parted company. Crazy Horse wanted to fight the whites but Sitting Bull said he was not ready to die yet. In May 1877 Sitting Bull took his band of two hundred tepees across the border into Canada. There he found peace. None of the traditional enemies of the Sioux were there and the Canadian officials told Sitting Bull he could stay, under two conditions: 1) that his people obey the law, and 2) that they feed themselves. That was fine with Sitting Bull, especially when he found game and found that the Mounties applied the law equally to whites and Indians.

But in October 1878 General Alfred Terry came to counsel with Sitting Bull. By now, the Canadian government had been urging the United States to come and get its Indians. Terry said the Grandfather would pardon Sitting Bull and give the Sioux cows in exchange for their guns, but they would have to walk back—one thousand miles. Sioux on horseback still frightened the Americans. Sitting Bull refused the kind offer. Eventually, however, the buffalo in Canada began to disappear, too, and by 1881 Sitting Bull could no longer feed his people and the Canadians refused to help. In July Sitting Bull surrendered his guns and crossed back into the United States. The government ignored the promise of a pardon and put him in prison at Fort Randall for nearly two years. In May of 1883 he was taken to be with his people at the Standing Rock Agency. It seemed only natural to him that he would be installed as chief of all the Sioux there, but Major James McLaughlin, in charge of the agency, put a hoe in Sitting Bull's hand and told him to go to work—like everyone else. Indian agents had found by this time that an agency would be run by the agent *or* by an influential chief. McLaughlin was determined that he, not Sitting Bull, would run Standing Rock. Hoe or not, Sitting Bull was the chief and the Sioux recognized him as such.

About this time there were some people with consciences back east who found that the Sioux had been badly swindled when forced to give up their vast hunting lands. They demanded an investigation and the Senate sent out a committee to look into the charges. The committee was there to whitewash the whole matter, but Sitting Bull was not going to allow that to happen. When he insisted on his right to represent his people, the com-



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IN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Sitting Bull

mittee chairman tried to browbeat him. Sitting Bull said, "You have conducted yourselves like men who have been drinking whiskey." Then he signaled with his hand and all the Indians got up and left. McLaughlin was stricken; the committee would know he was not running the agency, that Sitting Bull was.

Some of the chiefs pleaded with Sitting Bull to try again and he agreed. Another session was set up and Sitting Bull spoke at length about what was needed at the agency. He asked that what was promised to his people in the past should be given to them so they would not have to live like beasts.

> I sit here and look around me now, and I see my people starving. . . . We want cattle to butcher—I want to kill three hundred cattle at a time. That is the way you live, and we want to live the same way. . . . When the Grandfather told me to live like his people, I told him to send me six teams of mules, because that is the way white people make a living.

Then Sitting Bull enumerated the other things his people needed so they could make their living as white people did: two teams of horses with wagons, a horse and buggy, a cow and a bull for each family, yokes of oxen, male and female sheep and hogs, agricultural implements so they would not "be obliged to work barehanded."

> Our rations have been reduced to almost nothing, and many of our people have starved to death. Now I beg you to have the amount of our rations increased so our children will not starve. . . . I want clothing, too. . . . We want some clothing this month, and when it gets cold we want more to protect us from the weather. That is all I have to say.

All that Sitting Bull said was recorded in the Senate reports of the Forty-eighth Congress, but it did not help much. And McLaughlin was determined to break Sitting Bull's power as a chief, as the whites had been breaking the Sioux power. A people without military might seldom have influence, and the Sioux had been deprived of their weapons, their land, and their rights. The whites tried to destroy all their institutions, even their religion. It was little wonder then when a Paiute Indian in Nevada developed a new religion and called himself a messiah that the Sioux fastened upon it as a last hope.

McLaughlin had tried to send Sitting Bull away from the agency as much as he could. He persuaded him to go on a lecture tour of fifteen cities with the promise that he would see the Grandfather in Washington. The promise was never meant to be fulfilled. He was instrumental in getting Sitting Bull to go on tour with Buffalo Bill's "Wild West Show," but finally the chief said his people needed him and he would not leave anymore, even though Buffalo Bill wanted him to go with him again, this time to England and Europe.

Now the Nevada Messiah, Wovoka, was promising great things to Indians who believed in him. In 1890 the Sioux sent five delegates to investigate him and his claims. They came back convinced that Wovoka was the Christ of the Second Coming. This time Jesus was an Indian and he would bring with him the ancestors of the Indians and vast herds of buffalo. The white man would be driven out; he would disappear. To show their faith was real the Indians were to dance a special dance. The white man came to call it the Ghost Dance. It was unlike any Sioux dance. Men and women danced together holding hands in a large circle, jumping to the left.

The Sioux delegates to Wovoka were duped or hypnotized and came back as disciples, even claiming to have seen the nail marks in his hands and feet. The tenets of this messianic Paiute were simple: harm no one, always do right, tell no lies, do not fight, do not lie. Wovoka's religion developed quickly into a great religious revival. Hundreds of Indians were dancing. The dances became more and more frenzied. Short Bull, one of the delegates, began to say he was Wovoka's special representative and then began to claim messianic powers too and to add his own rites and interpretations.

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Wovoka, the Paiute Messiah

Sitting Bull at first gave no credence to the new religion, but perhaps he too finally succumbed to the vision of a decent life for the Indian again. He allowed his people to do the dance and then slowly took over as the head of the new religion at Standing Rock. The whites throughout the old Sioux lands became fearful. Most of the men who ran the agencies were frightened. A dancing Sioux symbolized war to them. The missionaries were the only calm whites. They knew the revival was a temporary thing. They understood the Sioux, and, unlike most whites running the agencies, they understood the Sioux language too and knew what they were saying and hoping.

The agents pleaded for more troops and when they finally arrived the Sioux were frightened. Troops had usually meant war and death. The dancers became more frenzied. Many of them "dropped dead" and while "dead" visited the spirit land and talked with deceased ancestors, relatives, and friends. The new religion would protect them from the soldiers.

At Standing Rock Agency McLaughlin decided to arrest and imprison Sitting Bull, hoping to lessen the frenzy, but McLaughlin did not want to take the responsibility. When the army received word from Washington to arrest Sitting Bull, McLaughlin persuaded them that it would be better if Standing Rock's Indian police carried it out.

Before dawn on December 15, 1890, Lieutenant Bullhead with forty policemen went to Sitting Bull's cabin and dragged him out of bed, hoping to get him dressed and mounted before anyone knew what was happening. But some of the old warriors heard the commotion and came to protect him. Catch The Bear shot Lieutenant Bullhead. As Bullhead fell he turned and shot Sitting Bull in the body. Red Tomahawk, another policeman, was behind Sitting Bull and shot him in the back of the head. In a few minutes there were twelve dead men and three wounded ones. Troopers who had been placed nearby rushed in to prevent further violence.

When the Indians in the other agencies heard of Sitting Bull's death they were truly frightened. Many of them fled the reservations and went to the Badlands. They were not making war, they were trying to find some place of safety. Soldiers were sent out to bring them back. There was some fighting but it was scattered, and the "war" quickly ended—not, however, until the tragic massacre of Big Foot's pitiful little band of starving, half-frozen followers at the infamous "battle" at Wounded Knee.

Sitting Bull was dead, the chief who had always asked for just one thing from the white man: "Let us alone." He had been the last to surrender the way of life of his people.

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Chief Joseph

Chapter 10

CHIEF JOSEPH

Statesman for Peace

IT WAS in the year 1900. Chief Joseph was still a prisoner, twenty-three years after he had surrendered and after he had been promised freedom. A "benevolent" government had given him permission to visit his homeland. He went to the grave of his father, and certainly Old Joseph's words came to him again as they had so many times.

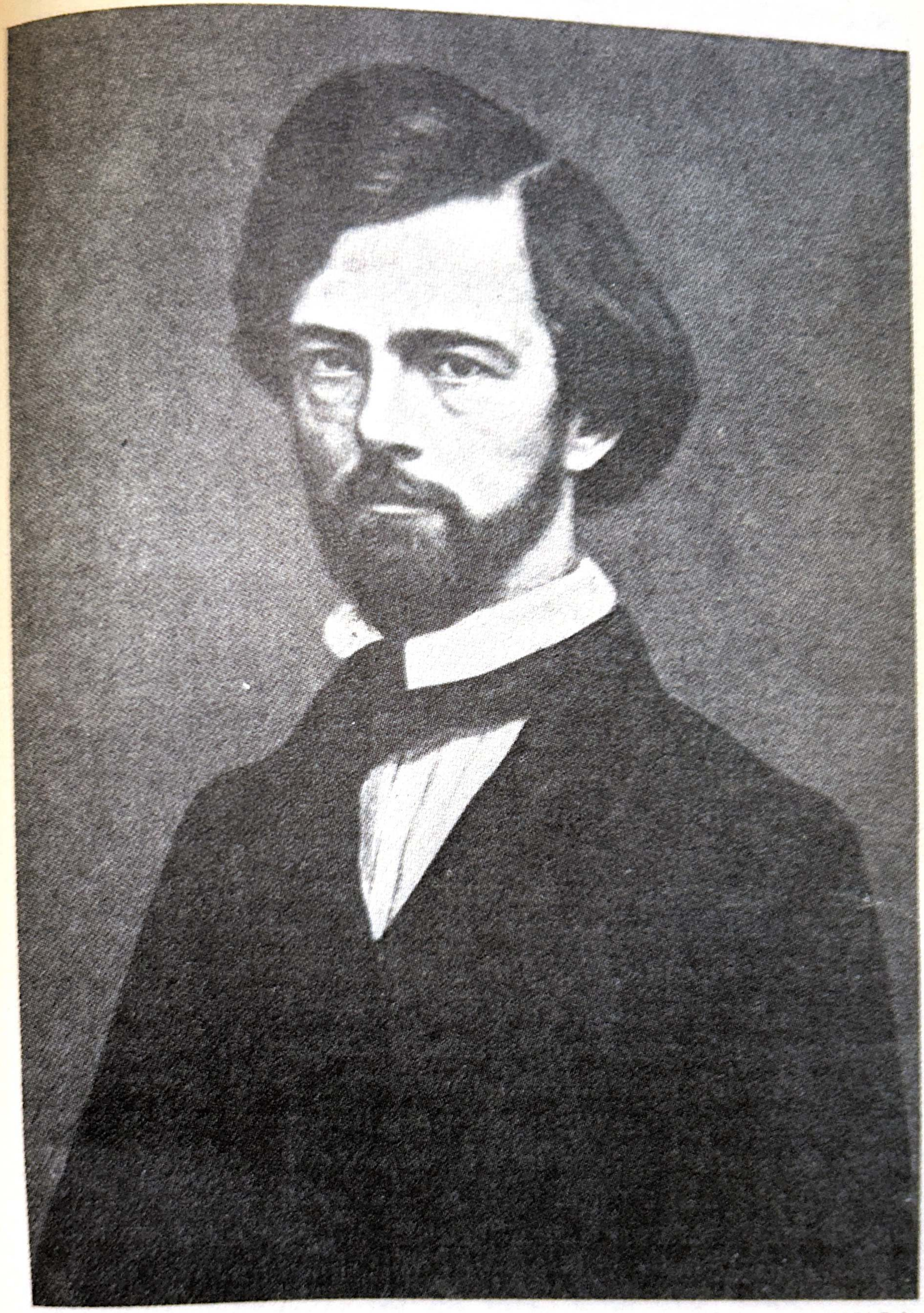
> My son, this old body is returning to my mother, earth, and my spirit is going soon, very soon, to see the Great Spirit Chief. . . . When I am gone, think of your country. You are the chief of these people. They look to you to guide them. Always remember your father never sold his country. You must stop your ears whenever you are asked to sign a treaty selling your home. A few years more and the white man will be all around you. They have their eyes on this land. My son, never forget my dying words: This country holds your father's body. Never sell the bones of your father and mother.

Chief Joseph wept silently. He had never sold the land. He had fought; fought to save the land for his people and fought to keep peace. He had been a man of peace, except for a brief period of two months when the white soldiers came shooting. Then he had no choice, but even then he had tried to prevent the flowing of blood, though it meant leaving the land of his father's grave.

Soon Chief Joseph lifted his head, straightened his back, and walked slowly away, a man of much dignity. He was looking for the last time at his beloved Wallowa Valley. Though he had not seen it for twenty-three years and there were now many whites on it, it was still basically as it had always been: the rivers still ran swiftly and musically, the mountain ranges were just as high and majestic, the lake waters were still clear and cold and teeming with fish. Only the forests were changing: the whites were cutting the trees. Not yet, however, had Joseph's words all come true about the white men. He had said, "We were content to let things remain as the Great Spirit had made them. They were not, and would change the rivers and mountains if they did not suit them."

Joseph's people had been in that beautiful country beyond human recall. Called Nez Percés by the French and Chopunnish by Lewis and Clark, their own name was Nimipu, signifying *The People*. They were a very capable people and they were well aware of it. They hunted and they fished, but long before Joseph's era they had become raisers of cattle and horses. Through selective breeding, they had developed the Appaloosa horse, which was greatly in demand by all who knew about them. The Appaloosa was distinctive in appearance; a paint with small splashes of color on its hindquarters, a handsome animal. It was mostly desired, however, because it was strong, surefooted in rocky country, seemingly tireless, and well-mannered, even gentle. It was a superb horse for working cattle. The Nez Percés raised enough to sell, at good prices, to whites traveling on the Oregon Trail and later to whites who needed a horse unsurpassed at working cattle in rocky terrain.

The Kamuinu had become horse Indians in the early eighteenth century and made annual forays into the plains to hunt buffalo, but the buffalo meat and hides were merely additions to their standard of living. They were not dependent upon the buffalo as the Sioux and other plains tribes were. When the whites began to encroach on their lands, the Kamuinu did not fight to hold a vast empire



N.Y.P.L.

Isaac Stevens, first governor of Washington Territory for hunting. They didn't need that much land. They required only grazing land, and that is all they tried to retain. Their country lay in what is today several counties in central Idaho, southeastern Washington, and northeastern Oregon. It was not only beautiful country, it was healthful and provided splendid pasturage for their stock.

But by 1855, many whites had come to the Northwest. Two years earlier Congress had officially formed the Territory of Washington and the first governor, Isaac Stevens, had immediately set about to secure Indian lands for white settlers. He'd made treaties with the tribes on the coast and it had been done quite easily. When he turned his attention to the inland Indians he found those people not at all anxious to relinquish their lands to whites. Since Stevens was a man of action and not diplomacy, he did not want to observe the time-consuming formalities held dear by the Indians, and he offended them. They believed he was trying to rush the negotiations because of some trickery they didn't understand.

However, despite Stevens's impatience, the Indians finally agreed to the treaty because they believed there was no other choice. The white man was there and was not going to disappear. Old Joseph was successful in holding on to the heartland of Nez Percé territory. It was sufficient for the needs of his people, and the treaty did contain a most important statement: "Nor shall any white man excepting those in the employment of the Indian Department . . . be permitted to reside on the said reservation without permission of the Indian tribe." Old Joseph could only hope the whites would honor what they had signed and would pay the price he believed Stevens had promised: "a wagon load of gold as much as six mules could pull over level ground." Old Joseph was a Christian, a Bible-reading Christian, and he believed then that the white Christians would live up to the tenets of their religion. Eventually he became disenchanted with the brand of Christianity displayed by white Christians, and finally threw his Bible into a council fire when he realized that the missionaries always took the side of whites in disputes with Indians—no matter what the facts were. He forbade anyone in his tribe to address him by his Christian name, Joseph.

Much of the trouble for Old Joseph and his son began with the discovery of gold on the Nez Percé reservation in 1860. Many whites began coming into Nez Percé land and nothing was done about it. By 1861 the trespassing whites —mostly miners—had even established a town called Lewisburg right in the middle of the reservation. There were sixteen hundred inhabitants. Old Joseph and his people had always been friendly with whites, right from their first meeting with Lewis and Clark. Whites had always been able to travel unmolested through Nez Percé country; they could even obtain help when needed. Despite the provocation of the badly broken treaty of 1855 the Nez Percés stood for peace, for peaceful settlement of the broken pledge. They had put up with the government's nonpayment of the purchase price of the Indian land it had "bought." They had put up with the nonfulfillment of the promises to supply schools, teachers, agents, sawmills, gristmills, shops, and mechanics.

But in 1863, the government had decided not to remove the whites from Indian land; instead, the Nez Percés were to be removed. They were to be "given" a piece of land near Lapwai (in Idaho) which was one-eighth of their territory "guaranteed" by the Walla Walla treaty in 1855. Old Joseph and the other chiefs living in the southern, or lower, part of Nez Percé country flatly refused even to negotiate. They had given up enough to white greed. The Nez Percés in the north allowed themselves to be swindled, and signed the treaty. Most of those people were Christians and one of their most influential chiefs, Chief Lawyer, who may have been bribed, helped maneuver the treaty.

Old Joseph's band and the other Lower Nez Percés continued to live as though there had been no treaty of 1863. They had not signed it and could not see how it could possibly apply to them. They went about their usual business of raising horses and cattle, they continued to hunt and fish, and they remained on a friendly basis with the whites, selling livestock and buying goods.

Old Joseph died in 1870, shortly after making his impassioned plea to his son. Chief Joseph's Indian name was Hin-mah-too-yah-lat-keht, which in English probably means "thunder rolling over the mountains." He inherited the chieftaincy from his father, but as in most Indian tribes, inheriting the title did not guarantee he'd have it for life. Chief Joseph—as he was called by his people and the whites—had to prove he was capable of leading. It was his fate to lead in a time of great crisis. A man of peace, he had developed a high sense of honor and dignity, and was successful.

A government report described him at this time as "six feet tall, straight, well formed and muscular; his forehead is broad; his perceptive faculties large, his head well formed, his voice musical and sympathetic, and his expression usually calm and sedate." He looked like a leader.

Shortly after Old Joseph died a government commission came to talk to the Lower, or nontreaty, Nez Percé chiefs about adjustments to the treaty of 1863. They suggested that perhaps the Nez Percés might be allowed to use the Wallowa Valley if the chiefs would sign the treaty. They again offered some schools, but Joseph said his people did not want schools. Schools would bring churches and they certainly didn't want them. He said the churches "will teach us to quarrel about God, as the Catholics and the Protestants do. . . . We do not want to learn that. We may quarrel . . . about things on this earth, but we never quarrel about God."

Chief Joseph and the other chiefs refused to talk about adjustments to the treaty of 1863. They had not signed it. It was of no consequence to them. In 1873, President Ulysses Grant re-ceded the Wallowa area to the Nez Percés. However, the white settlers protested loudly and to the right people, so the re-cession was revoked in 1875, and the land was again officially placed back in the public domain. This meant that Indians could not be on it because they were not part of the public.

Joseph told another commission that his people wanted only enough land upon which they could graze their horses and cattle. The Wallowa Valley was their winter pasturage. They had to have it and they did not want anything else from the government—no annuities, no agency handouts. He said, "You can keep your presents; we can go to your towns and pay for all we need; we have plenty of horses and cattle to sell, and we won't have any help from you; we are free now; we can go where we please," which Joseph's people continued to do for a while. Some whites understood, of course, and accepted the Nez Percés as friendly, prosperous neighbors. Some of the whites even knew the land really belonged to the Indians.

Friction began to develop, however. There were some whites without any scruples at all and they found that somehow the law did not apply whenever it was white versus Indian. Joseph said to a commissioner: "They stole a great many horses from us and we could not get them back because we were Indians. They drove off a great many of our cattle . . . branded our young cattle so they could claim them. We had no friends who would plead our cause."

Between 1860 and 1877, twenty-eight Nez Percés were murdered by whites and not one of the murderers was ever even brought to trial. During the same period not one white was killed by a Nez Percé; still Joseph worked to keep the peace, but his young men were outraged by the white's disregard for the Indian's human and civil rights. It was becoming almost impossible to keep the young men from seeking the time-honored revenge for murder of a relative or friend. But Chief Joseph kept hoping for a change of heart on the part of the white man. He was certain that if one white were killed in retaliation, the whole tribe would be punished. It was a thing whites often did. If one Indian broke the law they would attack the whole tribe—guilt by association.

It didn't even help when Major H. Clay Wood, the assistant adjutant general, was assigned in 1875 to investigate the treaty situation wtih the Lower Nez Percé bands. He reported that the treaty did not apply to them —they had never signed it and the government had violated the terms anyway. It was "null and void" regarding their occupancy of the Wallowa area. Nevertheless, General Oliver O. Howard was instructed in early 1877 to tell the nontreaty tribes that they must move from their homeland and go to the small tract at Lapwai Reservation. The treaty was valid and they must abide by it; after all, it had been signed by some Nez Percé chiefs.

Chief Joseph replied with clear logic:

> If we ever owned the land we own it still, for we never sold it. In the treaty councils the commissioners have claimed that our country had been sold to the government. Suppose a white man should come to me and say, "Joseph, I like your horses, and I want to buy them." I say to him, "No, my horses suit me, I will not sell them." Then he goes to my neighbor, and says to him, "Joseph has some good horses. I want to buy them but he refuses to sell." My neighbor answers, "Pay me the money, and I will sell you Joseph's horses." The white man returns to me, and says, "Joseph, I have bought your horses and you must let me have them." If we sold our lands to the government, this is the way they were bought.

General Howard may or may not have been able to see Joseph's irrefutable argument, but he had his orders and he gave the Lower Nez Percé chiefs an ultimatum. They must be on the move by April 1. The tribes were in a state of indecision. April 1 arrived and the chiefs asked Howard for another council. He granted it, but he could not change his orders. The Christian general had been given great leeway when he negotiated with Cochise, but this time he had no choice but to force the Nez Percé to move to Lapwai Reservation—no bargaining. Finally, on May 15, the general gave his final ultimatum. Yellow Wolf said years later that Howard had declared: "I am the man to tell you what you must do. You will come on the reservation within the time I tell you. If not, soldiers will put you there or shoot you down."

Whether Yellow Wolf remembered Howard's words exactly is not important, but "within the time" meant by

June 15. Thirty days to round up thousands of cattle and horses scattered over hundreds of square miles of grazing land was an utter impossibility. It was especially unfair at that time of year because the rivers were not just swift then, they were often swollen torrents which livestock could not possibly swim. The gauntlet had been flung down.

Chief Joseph could no longer insist the treaty did not apply and go on living as if it didn't. He and the other chiefs had been told to obey the provisions or be killed. Most of the young men wanted to fight. Two Moons later said there would have been no fighting but Howard "talked the rifle" all the time in council and made the young men angry.

Howard had absolutely infuriated Too-hul-hul-sote, who was an important, old, hot-headed chief of one of the nontreaty bands. He and Howard indulged in some loud and angry exchanges. Suddenly the general had his troopers arrest Too-hul-hul-sote and throw him in the guardhouse for "insubordination." The action was a tremendous insult to the chief and the rest of the Indians. When Too-hul-hul-sote was released he became an avid proponent of war.

Still Chief Joseph counseled peace, at tremendous cost to himself and to what he believed. The government was wrong, unquestionably. To accede to the outrageous demand was in reality selling "the bones of his father and mother." He had said: "The earth and myself are of one mind. . . . I never said the land was mine to do with as I chose. The one who has a right to dispose of it is the one who created it. I claim a right to live on my land and accord you the privilege to live on yours."

He also had said: "I have asked some of the great white chiefs where they get their authority to say to the Indian that he shall stay in one place, while he sees white men going where they please. They cannot answer me."

But after great torment Chiefs Joseph, White Bird, and Looking Glass decided they must move to Lapwai. Chief Joseph stated in his memoirs: "I said in my heart that rather than have war, I would give up my country. I would give up my father's grave. I would give up everything rather than have the blood of white men upon the hands of my people."

The man of peace set his people to their impossible task of being on the move to Lapwai by June 15. They worked long cruel hours trying to meet the deadline. They lost several hundred head of stock forcing them to swim the cold mountain streams made virtually uncrossable by the melting mountain snow. One herd of cattle could not be taken across a river and the Nez Percés left a small group of warriors to guard it until the waters receded. Some whites attacked the guard and ran off the herd. Joseph managed to prevent war even over that gross injustice.

On June 13, however, a chain of events moved Joseph and his people irrevocably into war. A young warrior had been brooding for two years about the unavenged murder of his father by a drunken white man. The night of June 12 an old man who wanted war taunted him unmercifully about it. The next day the young man found the murderer and killed him. Two other young impatient men accompanied him and killed some white men who had tied them and flogged them without mercy. They rode back to camp and in a frenzy of vengeance persuaded seventeen other young warriors to join them in retaliation for deaths, insults, and robberies. Chief Joseph was not in camp. The young men galloped off, and when they returned they had killed eighteen unfriendly whites.

When Joseph returned to camp the people were panic-stricken. He told them that General Howard would not hold them all responsible for what a few had done, but they knew the white man's guilt-by-association record, and those for war kept stirring up those who were undecided. Finally most of the people decided to go to White Bird Canyon, where they could defend themselves from the white man's retribution that was sure to come. Chief Joseph did not go with them. His wife had given birth to a child and he stayed at the campsite until she could be safely moved. He stated: "I counseled peace from the beginning. I knew we were too weak to fight the United States." The Nez Percés had many grievances against the government, but Joseph said, "I knew war would bring more."

The Indians lived in a noncoercive society. The tribe or its leaders could not force an individual to do or not do anything. A chief led by his influence and his force of personality. There was nothing Chief Joseph could have done to stop the impetuous youths from their vengeance if his persuasion had failed, even if he had been in camp. There was nothing he could actually do to prevent his band from fleeing to White Bird Canyon if that's what they wanted to do. The white men never understood this and continually held a tribe or a chief responsible for the actions of an individual.

As Joseph comforted his wife at the nearly deserted village area he also grieved:

> I would have given my life if I could have undone the killing of white men by my people. I knew that my young men did a great wrong, but I ask, "Who was the first to blame?" They had been insulted a thousand times; their fathers and brothers had been killed; their mothers and wives had been disgraced; they had been driven to madness by the whiskey sold to them by white men; they had been told by General Howard that all their horses and cattle which they had been unable to drive out of Wallowa were to fall into the hands of the white men; and, added to all this, they were homeless and desperate. I blame my young men and I blame the white men. I blame General Howard. . . . I do not acknowledge that he had the right to order me to leave Wallowa. . . . I deny that either my father or I ever sold that land. . . . I love it as I love my mother. I left there hoping to avoid bloodshed.

There was really no chance that the blood already shed would not lead to the shedding of more. When General Howard received the news about the eighteen white deaths, he dispatched two companies of cavalry under Captain David Perry and Captain Joel Trimble to round

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Looking Glass, Nez Percé war chief

up the Indians and bring them in for punishment. Chief Joseph had rejoined his people and was still counseling peace. There were ninety-four troopers approaching White Bird Canyon, and Joseph had about sixty men—not all warriors—and perhaps one hundred and twenty women and children. Joseph sent out six men carrying a white flag to see what the soldiers wanted. Unfortunately, there was a volunteer with the soldiers, named Ad Chapman, who had no use for talking to Indians. He raised his rifle and shot at the peace commission. They returned the fire, and the war was on.

The troopers charged into the canyon, right at the lodges they could see before them. The Nez Percés, however, had placed warriors on each side of the canyon. As the soldiers galloped in shooting they were caught in a devastating cross-fire. Most of these Nez Percés had never fired a gun at a man, but they were good hunters and this situation was much like hunting. Thirty-four cavalrymen died in that battle.

The die was cast. Joseph could no longer even try for peace. And he was not a warrior. The army officers and the soldiers always assumed that Joseph, being the head chief, was responsible for the remarkable strategy and tactics of the Nez Percés in that war which lasted two months. The truth is, however, that although Joseph was allowed to sit in the councils, the fighting and maneuvering were planned by the war chiefs. Looking Glass was probably the head war chief, as soon as his band joined with Joseph's. Rainbow, Yellow Wolf, and Joseph's younger brother, Ollokot, were important in the councils and the actual fighting. Eventually there were five small bands involved and their leaders would never have chosen Joseph as warrior leader. He had no experience in action against any enemy, and only once had he even crossed the mountains to participate in large buffalo hunts. In Indian society a warrior chief has attained that position by acts of daring and heroism against an enemy.

Old warriors who were interviewed many years later stated that not once did they ever hear Joseph make any suggestions or pronouncements in war council. Years later old Lahpeealoot said: "Joseph had no experience in war, and therefore the warring Indians would never have given him the command. . . . Experienced warriors did the directing at such times."

Joseph's fame should rest upon the solid evidence of his great efforts to keep his people's land by the use of nonviolent methods and on his great striving for peace. He did, however, have a most important function during the war. It was his duty to protect and guide the women, children, old people, and the sick and wounded. It was a sacred trust, especially in the type of war in which the Nez Percés were engaged.

After the affair at White Bird Canyon the Indians crossed the Salmon River and took positions to thwart General Howard's troops whom they knew would soon be on their trail. Howard was discouraged when he arrived at the Salmon and wrote: "No general could have chosen a safer position or one more likely to puzzle and obstruct a foe." He did manage to cross the river, and he plunged into the forest after the retreating Indians only to find out in a few days that they were no longer retreating. They had swung around and were now at his rear—cutting off his supplies. If the Indians had cared to do so, they could have ravaged and looted the white settlements while Howard's troops fought their way out of the heavy forest. They did not, however, at any time during the war, nor did they ever scalp or otherwise mutilate dead soldiers.

By this time General Howard had approximately five hundred troops and he set out after the Indians again. The Nez Percé warriors have been estimated to number as many as five hundred, and as few as fifty-one. The smaller number is that given by Lucullus McWhorter, who lived among the Nez Percés about thirty years while he gathered material for several books. He says there were only one hundred and ninety-one adult males and most of them could not or did not serve as warriors. His number may be too small. Possibly there were between one hundred and two hundred. However many there were, they were greatly outnumbered and before the fighting ended they had probably fought against three thousand bluecoats.

After the Salmon River fiasco Howard added some more troops to his army and set off to find the Nez Percés, who had all their noncombatants and two thousand horses to move along. The Indians chose a spot on the Clearwater River for another stand. Howard sent in a cavalry charge and blasted the Nez Percés with howitzers and Gatling guns, but the Indians had "dug in" and were shooting from behind mounds of earth and well-placed logs. The battle lasted a day and a half. The big guns took a toll among the warriors and the women and children, and Howard had thirteen soldiers killed and twenty-seven wounded. But he was suddenly left on the field with no one to fight. The noncombatants, under Joseph, had struck camp and, driving their huge horse herd, had been on the trail for hours before the warriors melted back into the forests and left Howard with nothing to show for the dead and wounded the battle had cost him.

After the fight at Clearwater, Joseph called a council to find the will of his people about the next step. Should they stay and fight, should they try to reach Canada, or should they surrender and hope for the best? Joseph, by this time, had decided that they should stay and fight—make the white man pay dearly for taking what was not his to take. He said:

> What are we fighting for? . . . It is for this land where the bones of our fathers are buried. I do not want to take my women among strangers. I do not want to die in a strange land. Some of you tried to say once I was afraid of the whites. Stay here with me now and you will have plenty of fighting. We will put our women behind us in these mountains and die on our own land fighting for them. I would rather do that than run I do not know where.

It was a powerful speech, but not powerful enough. The people voted to flee to Canada. They hoped the Crows might help them, and perhaps Sitting Bull would come down from his self-imposed exile for one more shot at the United States army. They believed they could make it to the border without any help if it was necessary. Joseph went with his people, with the warriors, the women, babies in mothers' arms, the old and feeble, the sick—and the two thousand horses. The horses, the men said, would make it possible to succeed. The soldiers would be riding the same horses mile after mile, day after day, but the Nez Percés would have fresh remounts.

Right into the Bitterroot Mountains they went, with General Howard pressing hard. Up and over the rocky, perilous Lolo Pass. The going was slow for the Indian cavalcade but it was even slower for the big cavalry horses and the white soldiers with all their paraphernalia of war. The Indians began to open up distance between them and the troops. Howard realized it and for the first time in the campaign used a medium of communication the Indians neither had nor knew. Howard used the telegraph. He directed that troops be sent to a strategic place where the Indians would be dropping down into the Bitterroot Valley in Montana. A Captain Charles C. Rawn hurried there with the few soldiers he had available to him, along with some civilian volunteers. They hastily threw up a fort, hoping to stop the Indians until Howard could catch up.

The war leaders were exceedingly clever. They made a sizable commotion in front of the fort which held the troopers' attention while the rest of the caravan went around the fort by using a narrow mountain trail thought to be impassable for a large group. The civilians in the area dubbed Rawn's fort "Fort Fizzle."

As the Nez Percés traveled through the Bitterroot Valley the white settlers did a brisk business with them. They had money to buy food and supplies and, though it angered the army, the settlers were happy to sell. Most of the whites had always liked the friendly Nez Percés anyway. (Perhaps the whites were hoping the Indians would make it to Canada.)

When the Nez Percés had crossed the valley east to the

Big Hole River they stopped to rest. General Howard was still in the mountains. But again he used the telegraph. This time it was a message to Colonel John Gibbon at Fort Shaw. Gibbon left immediately with two hundred troops, traveling southwest as fast as he could.

At dawn on August 9, Gibbon slipped down from a wooded height. A boy watering horses saw them and shrieked a warning. The troopers rushed in among the lodges and shot indiscriminately at men, women, and children as they rushed out of their tepees. The valiant flight to freedom should have ended there. But Too-hul-hul-sote, White Bird, Ollokot, and Looking Glass organized the warriors at the outer edge of the camp and they began pouring a deadly fire into the soldiers. Gibbon ordered the tepees burned, but a heavy dew made them too damp for that and Gibbon found his situation to be untenable. He had many wounded and dead soldiers and he had a serious leg wound. He withdrew up the hill from which he had attacked. The Nez Percés were furious and pursued him. He was pinned on the hillside.

While the fierce fighting continued Joseph and the non-combatants were caring for their wounded, taking down the tepees, rounding up the horses and starting off on the trail again. The warriors kept Gibbon pinned on the hill all day. He had no water and it was a hot day. He tried to bring up some needed ammunition, but the Indians captured two thousand rounds of it. He tried to bring up a howitzer, but the warriors intercepted it and pushed it off a cliff. The wounded and the dying moaned in the heat, their throats parched. Of seventeen officers Gibbon found he had only three not dead or badly wounded. One-third of his troops were casualties. It could have been another Little Big Horn, but the Nez Percé scouts brought word that General Howard was approaching. Howard later wrote: "Few military men, with good troops, could better have recovered after so fearful a surprise."

"Fearful" was the proper word. For the troops, it was twenty-nine dead and forty wounded. For the Nez Percés there may have been fifty women and children dead—including two of Joseph's wives. There were warriors too

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The beautiful Yellowstone Park, which still attracts thousands of tourists every year.

who would not fight again, and the indispensable Looking Glass had been killed.

The Indians left a small rear guard and Gibbon could not move until Howard arrived on August 11. The Nez Percés now had to travel fast, no matter the suffering of the many wounded, because General Howard was pushing hard and rapidly closing up on them. They headed south for Targhee Pass, hoping to get over the Continental Divide, but Howard was coming so fast that he had to be slowed down or stopped, whatever the risk. A bold plan was conceived. Forty Indian scouts of Howard's were known to be in the path of the Nez Percés in the vicinity of Targhee Pass. The plan was to send forty Nez Percés into Howard's camp at night as though they were the scouts returning to report. The forty daring Nez Percés rode audaciously in columns of four right into the camp, past the pickets, and began stampeding horses and the mules for the pack train. They shot troopers as they stumbled out of their tents. They especially made certain the pack mules were scattered far and wide. Then they returned to their own camp, knowing Howard was hamstrung.

General Howard was out of the action until he could obtain more pack mules, and he had many wounded. Gibbon, of course, was out of contention, too. The Nez Percés hurried on, through Targhee Pass and into Yellowstone Park. There were a few tourists there and the Nez Percés had to take them captive, but allowed them to escape a few days later, unharmed. But the traveling was excruciatingly slow with the wounded and the now rapidly tiring horses.

Out of Yellowstone the Nez Percés headed north toward freedom. But the telegraph wires had been singing again and this time it was Colonel Samuel Sturgis with six companies of the Seventh Cavalry—Custer's old outfit still looking for revenge. At Clark's Fork Canyon he placed himself squarely across the Indians' path, but they adroitly avoided a fight by flanking him as they forced their way through the tortuous windings of a rocky dry river bed. Sturgis was completely fooled, but he had fresh troops and horses and was soon on their trail.

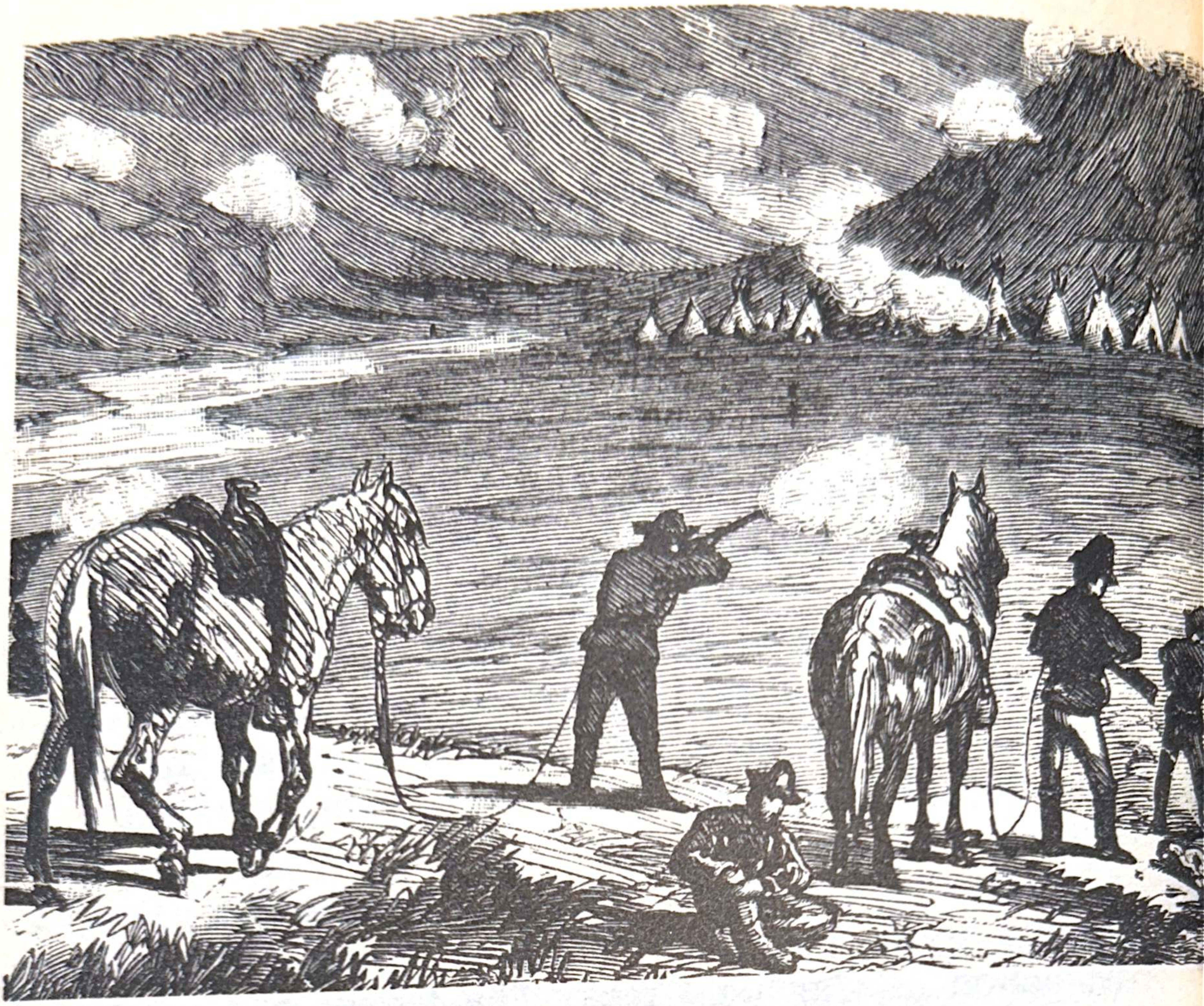
By mid-September the Nez Percés suffering grew worse. In the high altitudes the nights were growing cold, the horses were getting weaker as the grass became sparse. Sturgis was pressing hard. And the Crows, instead of helping, were scouting for the army and harassing the Nez Percé flanks and their scouting parties.

On September 13 Sturgis finally caught up. The Nez Percés fled into a high rocky canyon. The noncombatants kept moving but warriors went back to fight a holding action. This battle of Canyon Creek stopped Sturgis. He had pushed so hard that he arrived there with inadequate supplies of ammunition and rations. He used up both, then had to wait for General Howard, who was in pursuit again.

Joseph's people fled blindly on, in unfamiliar territory, heading north. They had suffered a crippling blow during the action at Canyon Creek. The Crows had succeeded in capturing nearly half of the horses so desperately needed in the constant running fight. As desperate as the situation was, the Indians began to feel real hope for the first time. They had taken some much needed supplies from a military depot and they had finally crossed the Missouri River. They still had all the problems of the suffering wounded, the exhausted old and feeble, and the skeletonlike horses, but they were approaching the boundary. They had Howard outdistanced. They had traveled about eighteen hundred tortured miles and they had fought off a combined total of about three thousand troops.

When they reached the north slope of Bear Paw Mountain they could see the promised land. At the bottom of the mountain they were thirty miles from the border—one day's march and Howard was two days behind. Surely they could rest one day—one day's respite for the hollow-eyed, emaciated people, one day for the dying horses before the last day's push. They had beaten all adversaries and all adversity. Freedom would soon be theirs.

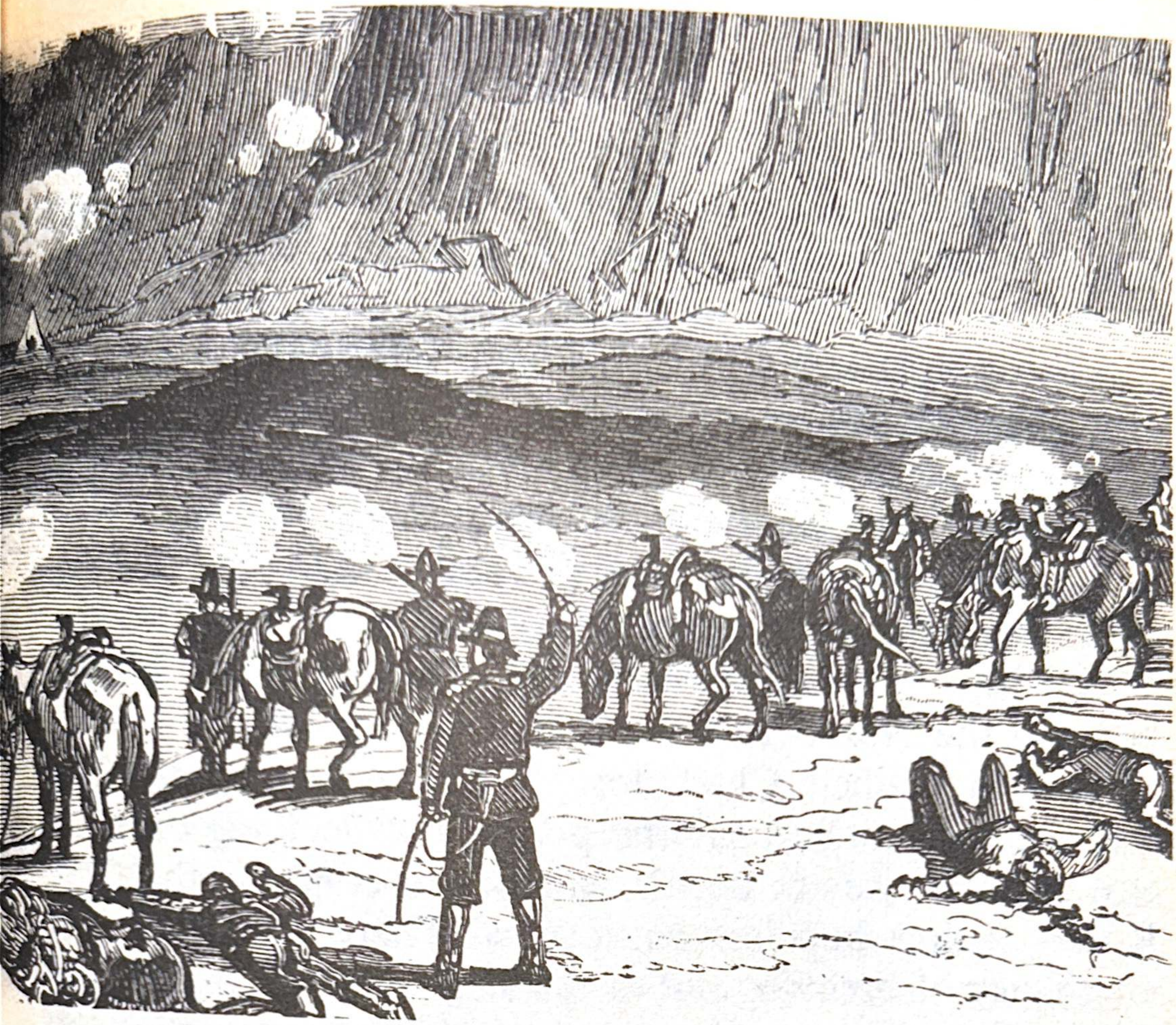
The decision was: rest. Again, however, General Howard had used the telegraph. Colonel Nelson Miles was



Col. Miles' attack on the Nez Percé camp

traveling light and fast from Fort Keough with 375 men and some cannon. He had been very lucky. He had figured the Nez Percés to be three or four days south of the Missouri. He had met two white trappers who told him they had seen the Indians cross the river two days before. Miles crossed the river and pushed even faster. On September 30 Crow scouts found the Nez Percé trail, and on October 3 Miles surprised the Indian one-day-of-rest camp. His men and his horses were fresh. He had plenty of ammunition and rations. He attacked from three sides.

These Indians did not panic as Indians were expected to. They answered the attack with deadly fire, knocking officers and men out of their saddles. The Nez Percé camp was in a ravine but there were sharpshooters on the bluffs around it. One hundred and fifty troopers started up to capture one well-placed group of riflemen and fifty-three



died or were wounded—only to find when they had achieved the height that the Indians had evacuated. But the lodges were surrounded and the Indian fighters found they had been separated into two groups. Chief Joseph put his small daughter on a horse and she escaped—eventually getting to Sitting Bull's camp. Joseph, the nonwarrior, took a rifle and joined the defense.

Miles ordered a cavalry charge but the Indians emptied so many saddles the charge was turned back. Other charges were ordered, and stopped. Then Joseph was told that Ollokot had been killed. The death of his brother, the much loved warrior of the family, seemed suddenly to fill Joseph with the futility of it all.

When night fell Miles laid siege to the camp. He had little to show for all his casualties. In the morning he no longer sent soldiers charging at the death-dealing warriors but used his cannon in an effort to destroy the lives and lodges of the beleaguered Nez Percés. After several hours of the lethal barrage he sent troopers in to finish the job, but they were again met with withering fire and withdrew.

Just before dark General Howard arrived with his staff. His army would be along soon. Miles and Howard were far from confident of victory, even at this point. Sitting Bull might be near, about to sweep down on them with a screaming horde. Miles had suffered a high rate of casualties, and the Indians gave no indication of surrender. What they would have done the next day is not known, because the Nez Percés were also in council.

At this council Chief Joseph was a key figure. This meeting was not just for the purpose of deciding on strategy, this one was to decide whether to continue the fight. It was such a hopeless cause now. There was absolutely no chance of breaking out of the siege and making the last thirty miles. The warriors could have done it alone. But the warriors had been fighting to find freedom for their women and children as well as for themselves. There was no thought of leaving them at the mercy of white soldiers.

At dawn's light Miles and Howard saw a white flag on a pole in the Indian camp. A messenger brought word that Chief Joseph would come to surrender that day. He didn't come until nearly sunset. An officer described him: "His scalp lock was tied with otter fur. The rest of his hair hung in a thick plait on each side of his head. He wore buckskin leggings and a gray woolen shawl through which there were the marks of four or five bullets received in the last conflict. His head and wrists were also scratched with bullets." He came riding with his head bowed, his hands clasped on the saddle pommel, a rifle across his knees. Five warriors walked by the side of his horse. When he came near Miles and Howard he straightened himself. With head erect he gracefully slid from his saddle, walked to Howard and held out his rifle, butt first—signal of peace. Howard indicated Joseph should give it to Miles, which he did.

With great dignity he addressed the victors:

> I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are killed. Looking Glass is dead. Too-hul-hul-sote is dead. The old men are all dead. . . . He who led the young men is dead [Ollokot]. Oh, it is cold and we have no blankets. The little children are freezing to death. My people, some of them, have run away into the hills, and have no blankets, no food. No one knows where they are —perhaps they are freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children, and see how many of them I can find. Maybe I shall find them all among the dead. Hear me, my chiefs . . . ; my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more, forever!

The long unfair, uneven campaign had ended, as it had to end, with defeat. Miles promised Joseph that he and his survivors would be taken to Lapwai Reservation, which was where they were going before the three young men killed the whites. Miles had superiors, however, who had other ideas.

The Nez Percés who were still alive were placed on flatboats and taken down the Missouri all the way to Fort Leavenworth. Later they were put in boxcars and shunted around on railroads until they were finally put off in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). There they were handed some seeds and some old worn-out implements, and told to scratch out a living for themselves.

These proud mountain people, superb horsemen, horse breeders and cattle raisers, did not know how to make a living as farmers. They began to die. They died from starvation and from malaria, for which they had no resistance. Nearly half of them died in Indian territory.

Chief Joseph spoke from his heart after promises were made and not fulfilled:

> I do not understand why nothing is done for my people. I have heard talk and talk and nothing is done. . . . Words do not pay for my dead people. They do not pay for my country. . . . They do not protect my father's grave. . . . Good words will not

> give my people good health and stop them from dying. Good words will not get my people a home where they can live in peace and take care of themselves.
>
> Treat all men alike. Give them the same law. Give them an even chance to grow. All men were made by the same Great Spirit Chief. They are all brothers. The earth is the mother of all the people, and all the people should have equal rights upon it. . . .
>
> I know my race must change. . . . We only want an even chance to live as other men live, we ask to be recognized as men. . . .
>
> Whenever the white man treats the Indian as they treat each other, then we will have no more wars. We shall be alike—brothers of one father and one mother, with one sky above us, and one country around us; for this we are waiting and praying.

Joseph and his people continued to wait and pray. And Nelson Miles worked to make amends. He fought every one he could fight. He proclaimed that what was done to the Nez Percés was a violation of surrender terms and of his honor and the honor of the United States. He spoke in glowing terms of Chief Joseph as "a man of more sagacity and intelligence than any Indian I ever met; he counseled against war, and against the usual cruelties practiced by Indians."

Not even the popular and famous Nelson Miles could obtain any redress of wrongs. Someone finally did take action, though, when it appeared there might soon be no Nez Percés alive. In 1885, the order came from Washington to return them to the Northwest. Most of those who had managed to survive were taken to Lapwai—which wasn't the Wallowa, but it was far removed from the foreign harshness of Indian Territory. "Most," however, did not include Chief Joseph. He was deemed a troublemaker who should not be with his people. He was sent to the Colville Reservation in northern Washington, which wasn't anything like Wallowa or even Lapwai, and he was not with his people for whom he still felt great responsibility.

From 1885, almost until his death, he petitioned to be reunited with his people. He was once allowed to go to Washington to plead his case to President Theodore Roosevelt. The president courteously heard him out, but did nothing. Finally he asked only to be allowed to live out his few remaining years as an individual in the Wallowa Valley he loved so dearly, near his father's grave. Someone in authority did eventually grant permission for his brief visit in 1900. He died of a stroke in 1904 on Colville Reservation in northern Washington.

Today an impressive granite shaft marks Chief Joseph's grave, but it is a long way from his father's bones in Wallowa Valley.

Chief Joseph

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HISTORY

Red Chiefs and White Challengers contains the most important chapters in the story of the white man's acquisition of Indian territory. Vivid biographical sketches of the men who took part in the historic struggles reveal the drama and tragedy that accompanied the establishment of a New World. The challenge to the first Americans is frankly detailed in the careers of pioneer settlers like John Smith, frontier statesmen like Andrew Jackson, and military leaders like John Chivington and George Crook. The noble Indian defense is seen through the eyes of the Shawnee chief, Tecumseh; John Ross, writer of the Cherokee constitution; Cochise, spearhead of an Apache rebellion; the Nez Percé chief, Joseph; and the Sioux chief, Sitting Bull.

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